

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: REVOLUTIONIZING BUSINESS FOR FUTURE

Digital transformation has emerged as a pivotal strategy for organizations seeking to thrive in the fast-paced, technology-driven landscape of the 21st century. It encompasses a profound shift in how businesses operate, deliver value to customers, and adapt to changing market dynamics through the integration of digital technologies.

At its core, digital transformation is not merely about adopting new technologies; it represents a fundamental rethinking of business models and processes. Companies are leveraging advanced tools such as artificial intelligence, big data analytics, cloud computing, and the Internet of Things (IoT) to enhance operational efficiency, improve customer experiences, and drive innovation.

One of the most significant impacts of digital transformation is the enhancement of customer engagement. In today's digital age, consumers expect personalized interactions and seamless experiences across various platforms. Businesses are utilizing data analytics to understand customer behavior better, enabling them to tailor their products and services to meet specific needs. This shift has led to increased customer loyalty and higher retention rates, essential for long-term success.

Moreover, digital transformation fosters agility within organizations. Traditional business models often struggle to adapt to rapid changes in the market. However, by embracing digital tools, companies can respond swiftly to emerging trends and disruptions. For instance, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated digital transformation across various sectors, compelling organizations to pivot quickly to remote work, online sales, and digital communication. This adaptability has proven vital in maintaining operations during uncertain times.

Additionally, digital transformation opens up new avenues for innovation. With technologies such as cloud computing and AI, businesses can experiment with new products and services without the heavy investment typically associated with traditional R&D processes. Startups and established companies alike can leverage these technologies to innovate at a much faster pace, driving competition and fostering a culture of creativity.

However, the journey of digital transformation is not without its challenges. Organizations must overcome resistance to change, ensure data security, and invest in upskilling their workforce. It requires a strategic approach, aligning technology initiatives with business objectives and fostering a culture that embraces change.

In conclusion, digital transformation is more than a technological upgrade; it is a comprehensive strategy that redefines how organizations operate and compete. By prioritizing customer experience, enhancing agility, and fostering innovation, businesses can navigate the complexities of the modern marketplace. Embracing this transformation is not just an option; it is essential for survival and growth in an increasingly digital world. As companies continue to adapt and evolve, those that successfully harness the power of digital technologies will lead the charge into the future.

Purmandal-Chota Kashi of Duggarland

■ G.L. KHAJURIA

Our revered Rig Veda echoes, "Give sight to our eyes, sight to our bodies so that we may see, may we see the world as a whole and may we see it in detail". Our country particularly, the greater snowy Himalaya is prominent for the abodes of Gods and Goddesses as a whole, apart from a land of temples, shrines, sanctum sanctorum and of course, a treasure trove of pilgrimages, varied ramification which occupy their unique and enchanting placement. Having their spiritual and prodigious reverence, people from India and abroad throng in huge number, pay obeisance and obtain blessings from the supreme Gods and deities.

Amongst a few to be named are Bawa Amar Nath, Mata Vaishno Devi, Khir Bhawani, Mahalak, Shmi, Durga Mata, Mata Kali (Bahu Fort), Airwan (Kathua), ManiMahesh (HP), Gupt Ganga (Bhadervah), Pingla Mata (Ramnagar), Mansa Devi, Badarkali, Vasuki Nag (Kailash Kund), Sukrala Mata (Billawar), Mata Bala Sundri on the hill top between Billawar and Kathua, Ashta-d-Bhujia, Siekle Mountain (Kishtwar), Jawalaji, Sudhmahadev, Mantalai (Chenani), Om Parvat (Great Himalaya), Kalkaji, Surinsar, Mansar, Mounгри, Utterbehni. Though the list remains unending insofar as such religious spots of all religions are concerned.

It is ,unambiguously, no denying the fact that 'Purmandal' occupies its own placement, prominence and as far as its provenience is concerned, it equates in status with that of Kashi in Utter Pradesh (U.P.). Purmandal is a small village barely 30 kms from Jammu to its South-East . There are twin routes to the sanctum sanctorum; one from SidhraKunjwani bye-pass road and the other from NH-1 from Kaluchak through Birpur-Utterbehni through various twists and turns en route to



the last tourist temple of purmandal. The prominence of the temples of Purmandal is a testimony of the Valley of Kashmir which in other words round is the fountainhead of 'Shaivism' of which the first building of the temple was, de fact, ascribed to the ruler of time by name Raja Vent Dutt. In other words round, he has been as well named as 'Vinayaditya' or 'Avantivarman' who ruled those times some eleven and a quarter hundreds years back i.e. (855 to 883 A.D.)

Situated alongside river 'Devak', it further meanders down and join Utterbehni another tirthsthan and thence downwards flows near Vijaypur, situated alongside a small town on Jammu Pathankote road and the bridge over the river is probably the longest one in the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir. It is commonly believed that most of Shiv-Lingams have spiritually originated in the close vicinity of Purmandal alongside 'Devak' proximity and is further reported that "Shiva and Mata Paravatiare those of Indreshwar, Bhuteshwar, Gyaneshwar, Kasheshwar and Bikeshwar. The sanctum sanctorum is of ample importance as a prominent tirthsthan around the years, prefer-

ably during 'Shivratri' and Chaitra Chaudish' like that of Airwan in Kathua district. The place is having its prominence that saint Kabir and Ustad Bismila Khan had been over this pious and seered spots.

The sanction sanctorum of Purmandal bears relevance to "Kashi" Devsthan in U.P. where centuries old temple of Mighty 'Vishwanath' till date exists but historically it is known that 'Raja Vishwa Chand' usurped him and confined him to 'Manika Ghat' after having some tribal confrontation and as such King 'Vishwanath' relinquished the kingdom and confined himself to "Manika Ghat" in late stages of his life. Here at 'Purmandal' multi-Shiva Lingams have originated spiritually called in local parlance as 'Aap Shambo' lingam which as per legends describe that a famous Raja by name King Veni Dutt as mentioned earlier ruled in those ancient times in between eight to the close of Ninth Century had also visited Purmandal as it was a part of his Kingdom.

But, whatsoever legends are affiliated to this sacred spot, the fact remains that it was hoary past. The spot is of utmost prominence and Shakti in the Northern part of India

where devotees in Lac assemble over here to have holy Darshan, pay obeisance and obtain blessing. Even great Guru Nanak had visited the spot.

The Village Purmandal is populated on either side of 'Devika River' which with revolving wheel of time many more temples were constructed during Maharaja's regime. But with the exploding population and heavy biotic pressure, the areas surrounding the spot have turned barren despite the fact that the Govt. Deptt. of all hues have put in all out efforts to rehabilitate and bring back to its pristine grandeur and glory but all in vain. Even the historically old religious structures which form an important part of our national heritage stand neglected and are desertifying impending dooms day. Apart from historic temples, there are old Sarais and Havelis having the same status. During Maharaja's regime (Dogra rulers), it was earmarked to construct a cluster of sequential temples from 'Utterbehni' to Purmandal where the remnant material (Iron Girders and their allies) stand spanning the two sacred spots, and after dogra rulers all remained silent. Here the Govt. needs to take up the matter to save and invigorate this sacred spot of our national heritage. Restoration of dilapidated temples, Havelis, Sarais to its pristine grandeur is the call of the hour and glory as devotees/ tourists from far and wide areas come here for holy Darshan, pay obeisance and obtain blessing.

The area is just like that of 'Kashi' (U.P) and as such dead bodies of locality around are cremated and one need not to go 'Haridwar' for immersion of ashes and as per local parlance are sured a place in heaven (Gati Locally spoken). Miraculous are the ways of God that the remnants of ashes are nowhere visible and disappear in the sandy 'Devak'.

The holy river needs to be rehabilitated by ensuring ecological balance

by way of massive afforestation work on the barren hill-tops, catchments areas and here the Forest, Horticulture, Sericulture and other sister departments have to pick up the thread sincerely for this pious cause and its monitoring be ensured by accountability commission. The works executed over couple of years back are no where in sight and lakhs of money went to drain.

Classic clean lines campaign, shall have to be launched by one and all to make 'Devak' neat, clean and green, imposition of fine who litter the sacred spot and its surrounds. It is imperative and this shall have to be ensured by constituting a committee to assist "Dharmarth Trust Deptt", apart from planting multihued flowering plants, climbers and creepers on either side of the river; particularly those best suited to site. Water conservation, construction of ponds, tanks, boalis and other water bodies (Ghats) are warranted to be constructed. During my last visit to "Purmandal", I observed that a man from Punjab with this associates had engaged labourers for the construction of a bathing ghats most keenly. Apathetic altitude of our people and Govt deserves to be blamed for the act of negligence. When the outsider from Punjab is devotedly on this pious job what hinders we people and the Govt? It is rather a matter of shame.

Conclusively, therefore, imperfect and unawareness in our grey matter need to be revived to enhance the beauty of our old religious heritage and bring back to its pristine grandeur and glory by one and all so that our coming generations may not abuse us for utter act of negligence which our earlier "Rulers / ancestors have bestowed upon us. And lastly I add here the last line "How senseless seems to me the man who has seen his neighbour ill, old and dead, and yet remains happy and is not shaken by fear"Ash- vaghosha.

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Democracy triumphed in J&K

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

The democracy has once again triumphed in the mountainous region of Jammu and Kashmir. The gullible people of the UT have took active part in the just concluded Assembly polls. The polls culminated into the birth of NC-Congress alliance government & Omar Abdullah took oath of office and secrecy as the first chief minister of a Union territory .The assembly polls witnessed an unprecedented and overwhelming participation of the voters perhaps for the first time since 2014 polls .The overall voter turnout of all the three phases of polls was staggering 63.86 percent which is significant by any measure and standard. People of J&K have again reposed their trust and confidence in their democratic destiny and there were long queues of voters seen near the polling stations and there was enthusiasm among the young ,first time voters including West Pakistan refugees ,POJK refugees ,Valmikis and Gurkha community and their feelings and emotions were very high as they voted for the first time since the start of the electoral democracy or we can say that these communities exercised their right to vote for the first time since 1950. The successful conclusion of peaceful assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir signifies ,represents ,reflects and symbolizes the victory of democracy and it points towards the fact that democracy has been successful with completion of free and fair polls in the electoral history of J&K and thus we can take pride in the fact that for first time after the abrogation of controversial Article 370 as well as the downsizing of the state into UT and division of JK into two UT's of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh is a commendable and challenging job for this the voters and other

public of J&K ,political parties ,ECL,UT's electoral officer; other officials of the LG administration and all the security forces including the J&K police all should be appreciate for the successful culmination of the Assembly polls and it will not be an exaggeration to say that democracy has triumphed with the active participation and involvement of voters and all stakeholders as all have contributed to the successful completion of the electoral exercise in J&K paving way for the constitution of a democratic ,popular and people's government for the first time after the end of 10 years gap .This UT polls, the people have trusted and given majority mandate in favor of NC-Congress alliance and have also mandated BJP to perform the important and indispensable role of a viable, effective and strong opposition so that coalition government headed by Omar is reminded to perform and deliver to the best of its capacity for the people of JK who have reposed their faith ,trust and confidence in NC-Congress coalition .The political churning of elections has produced the nectar in the form of NC-Congress coalition government which should come up to the expectations of the orphaned and alienated people of the UT .Now it remains to be seen how will the new coalition arrangement function to the best of its capacity and deliver the best for the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The new government of NC-Congress headed by Omar Abdullah should without involving into controversial political issues and tussle with the LG & centre government should try to address the issues and concerns of the people .The chief election commissioner of India Rajive Kumar has said that the spirit of democracy has triumphed because of the significant participation of the voters and it

is no ordinary thing and the people ,ECL,CEO OF UT,LG administration ,security forces should feel proud for the successful and peaceful as well as free and fair polls .India's standing and stature has got a boost due to the peaceful ,successful and overwhelming participation of the voters of every segment in the historical and crucial polls .The unprecedented and overwhelming participation of the voters indicates that in this and through this assembly polls ,democracy has once again been victorious in J&K thus giving a befitting replay to Pakistan and its sponsored terrorists .In fact the successful JK elections which saw no untoward incident sounds a defeat to the forces of doom and is a death kneel to terrorism and thus ballot has defeated bullets .The nefarious designs of terrorists and their mentors across the border has been frustrated and defeated. The successful culmination of the recent assembly polls in JK shows that people want change, normalcy and development and ever larger participation of the voters in the median polls shows the triumph of democracy.CEC Rajiv Kumar stated that the spirit of democracy triumphed as the assembly polls this time culminated successfully with the ever larger participation of the voters .It was in 2024 Lok Sabha elections ,that the people of Kashmir started reposing faith in democracy .It became crystal clear after the Assembly elections that democracy is now gaining roots with record increase in the voter turnout and voting percentage in the UT .The peaceful conclusion of the participative electoral process in JK is a triumph of democratic spirit and a testament to the resilience of the people of the UT is what CEC Rajiv Kumar said. The gesture of embracing democracy strengthens

its foundations and the people have now charted their democratic journey to ever greater heights and have elected their representatives .The will of the people of J&K has been conveyed as the historic legislative assembly has been constituted and now NC-Congress alliance government has been formed and first chief minister Omar Abdullah has been sworn and he took the reins of the government from LG as the swearing ceremony of the Omar Abdullah and his team of ministers have been administered oath of office and secrecy by LG Manoj Shina at SKICC at the banks of Dal Lake in a glittering function attended by many VVIP's some from Delhi and other states of India mostly from INDIA bloc. Assembly elections were held in J&K after a decade and were the first since provisions of Article 370 of the constitution were abrogated and the erstwhile state divided into two UT's of Jammu and Kashmir & Ladakh in 2019.Following the much needed delimitation exercise ,the number of assembly seats were increased from 83 to 90,excluding to those allocated to POK .In short the democracy has triumphed as the people again embraced democracy by actively participating in the crucial assembly polls and have elected the NC-Congress coalition of their choice .Now all eyes are set on the new dispensation as how will it try to implement the promises and assurances given in the poll manifestoes and the government should begin on a positive note and thus leave the political issues to be followed after some time.

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Stubble disposal measures

■ VIJAY GARG

Disposal of stubble is a serious problem. Claims are made every year to tackle pollution caused by stubble burning, but the irony is that till date a permanent solution to this problem has not been found. Claims may be made in this regard, but in reality this problem is becoming more acute every year. The sad thing is that governments become aware of this only when due to the huge increase in air pollution due to this problem, it becomes difficult for people to breathe. If seen, every year due to burning of stubbleNational Capital Region Delhi, western part of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab remain in the grip of severe air pollution from October to December. These months come as a problem for the people here, because all the efforts, campaigns and all the steps taken by the governments of these states to stop it prove to be futile. As a result, the severity of air pollution is increasing day by day and governments appear helpless in front of it. All this happens when there is a ban on stubble burning.The is. The Supreme Court has also expressed serious concern about what kind of management it is that stubble is being burnt despite the ban. This also proves that they are adept at preventing pollution. Breathing poisonous air: Due to increasing air pollution in the capital, people here are forced to breathe poisonous air. Due to this, a large number of people in Delhi are suffering from asthma. As a result, increasing air pollution becomes fatal for people already suffering from asthma. Increase in asthma patients in such circumstancesIt is a dangerous sign. Anyway, due to changes in weather, pollution is increasing. So far, a nine-fold increase in incidents of stubble burning has been recorded in Punjab. It is believed that this time after harvesting of paddy in Punjab, 200 lakh tonnes of stubble will be left, whereas the state aims to manage only about 20 lakh tonnes of stubble. Obviously, the remaining stubble will be burnt due to lack of management. Although the Punjab government has given approval to set up 58 compressed left gas plants for stubble disposal, but it does not have land to store the stubble.It is not. Environmental cleanliness: It is the responsibility of all of us to keep the environment clean. Ensuring a clean environment is the joint responsibility of the Centre, State, society and people. Everyone should do this honestly. But in this we have failed. There is a need to make a coordinated action plan to control air pollution not only at that time, especially during winter when the sky is covered with smog and toxic gases, but for the entire year. The situation of air pollution in the entire country can be easily estimated.Is. Last year, a petition was filed in the Delhi High Court in which it was said that the level of air pollution in the National Capital Region increases every year due to burning of stubble by farmers in neighboring states. This should be controlled and emphasis should be laid on making compost from stubble. Doing this will have double benefits. Making compost will curb the increasing pollution and on the other hand, farmers will be able to get better and chemical-free yields by using this compost. Role of other factors in air pollutionIt plays an important role, but the dust on the roads and the garbage and biomass spread there also have an important contribution in it. This creates a cocktail of poison in the environment. The most lethal inorganic aerosols in the environment are created by the combination of sulfuric acid and nitrogen oxides emitted from power plants, industries, traffic, and ammonia produced by agricultural activities. This cocktail is the cause of approximately 23 percent air pollution. If we take stock of the air pollution in Delhi, we find that 20 percent of the smog is emitted by vehicles in Delhi.Of these, 60 percent comes from vehicles outside Delhi and around 20 percent comes from burning biomass. In many recent research studies conducted in this context, an attempt has been made to show that the problem of air pollution is no less than the threat of a war, hence the claim of development can be effective only in the situation when the problem of air pollution is not less than the threat of war. Let us try to find a solution keeping in mind the current circumstances of our country.

(The author is Retired Principal).

Rural Youth Lead India's Digital Transformation

■ MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

"Desh ka Yuva" are the torchbearers of India's future, driving forward the aspirations of Amrit Kaal with their energy and innovation. As the country undergoes a digital transformation, this expansion is not just about boosting efficiency in various fields; it's also about creating a world where technology empowers people to improve their lives. The rise of digitalization has unlocked new possibilities, enabling millions to seize opportunities that were once out of reach. The Comprehensive Annual Modular Survey (July 2022 - June 2023) captures this shift, revealing how rural youth, in particular, are embracing technology, integrating digital tools into everyday life, and bridging the gap across sectors.

Rural India is undergoing a remarkable transformation as more young people embrace technology and connect to the digital world. The adoption of mobile technology is on the rise, with a growing number of rural youths integrating digital tools into their daily lives. In rural areas, 95.7% of persons aged 15-24 years can use mobile phones, with the figure being 97% in urban areas. 99.5% of population is covered by 4G in rural areas. Where as in Urban area 99.8% of population has a 4G connection. In rural area, among those aged 15-24 years,

82.1% can now access the internet, showcasing a shift towards a more connected generation. Although urban areas still lead with 91.8% internet accessibility for this age group, the gap is steadily narrowing. The Comprehensive Annual Modular Survey reveals that 80.4% of rural youth in the 15-24 age range used the internet in the three months leading up to the survey, the highest percentage recorded in rural India. In contrast, the 15-29 age group in urban areas reported a slightly higher usage at 91.0%, reflecting how digital adoption is gaining ground across both rural and urban settings. This growing trend highlights the rapid technological shift taking place in the heart of rural India, signaling a new era of digital inclusion and empowerment.

The digital journey of rural India is steadily advancing, with young people gradually mastering various technological skills. While not all can fully utilize digital tools, many are finding their way in this evolving landscape. Among the 15-24 age group, 74.9% can now send basic messages, a key step towards embracing digital communication.

As digital competence grows, rural youth are tackling more complex tasks like copying, pasting, and moving data- 67.1% of the 15-24 age group and 65.6% of the 15-29 age group can per-

form these operations.

The use of the internet for information searches is also on the rise, with 60.4% of those aged 15-24 and 59.3% of the 15-29 age group actively searching online.

Some areas, however, like sending emails, remain challenging. Only 43.6% of rural youth aged 15-24 can send emails, while the number is similar at 43.4% for the 15-29 age group.

Online banking presents another hurdle, with 31% of 15-24-year-olds and 33.3% of 15-29-year-olds able to conduct transactions.

Though gaps remain, the gradual adoption of digital skills among rural youth signals progress towards a more connected and empowered rural India, where technology increasingly opens doors to opportunity and growth.

The government has launched several initiatives to promote digitalization, significantly transforming India's connectivity landscape.

Under Digital India Initiative, various technology-led startups and innovation schemes like Technology Incubation and Development of Entrepreneurs (TIDE 2.0), Gen-Next Support for Innovative Startups (GENESIS), domain specific Centres of Excellence (CoEs) and Next Generation Incubation Scheme (NGIS) have been undertaken. Also, BharatNet

Project, which connects rural areas with Optical Fibre Cable, and USOF (Universal Service Obligation Fund) schemes that bring 4G services to remote villages have been implemented to expand broadband access.

The India BPO Promotion Scheme (IBPS) and North East BPO Promotion Scheme (NEBPS) encourage IT/ITes growth in underserved regions, creating employment opportunities. PM-WANI initiative is also in place to provide public Wi-Fi hotspots across the country.

These initiatives collectively bridge the digital divide and propel India's digital transformation.

Rural digital expansion in India is enabling young people to adopt technology, bringing significant changes to everyday life and narrowing the gap between urban and rural areas. With the availability of affordable high-speed internet and various government initiatives, rural youth are becoming more capable of using digital tools for communication, education, and financial activities.

This shift represents a growing recognition of technology's role in promoting development and opportunities. As digital literacy and infrastructure continue to advance, rural youth are set to contribute meaningfully to a more connected and inclusive future for the country.