

**INTERVENTION OF RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
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Parliament of India is an institution that represents representative democracy and has evolved over time to what it is today. A mix of idealism, politics, bureaucracy working to address the increasingly more and more vocal concerns of the people that it represents.

We all know that Technology especially the Internet is the major disruptive force that is changing everything and turning every model known and unknown on its head. At a basic level it is connecting the average citizen to information and data and empowering him or her in an unprecedented way - in good ways and bad ways

This puts all Institutions under pressure to change and adapt - and more so Parliaments and Parliamentary representatives.

India is the worlds largest democracy - 71 years as a democracy. It is a vibrant democracy. and it is also leading the charge on Technology. So its inevitable that we use Technology to further transform Legislatures and make them more effective, responsive,transparent and accountable. Our approach is still fundamentally

Our present Government and Parliament leadership is heavily invested in both transforming Governance and Politics and doing so by embedding technology deeply in Governance and Democracy. And not by small little tech solutions around the edges but by creating platforms that deliver on full power of Technology and innovation to help shape the future of a more robust and vibrant Democracy. So Indias approach is built around the fundamental and unchanged belief that four democracy continues to revolve around the work and impact of the individual who is the representative of the people - the MP.

We have bypassed the temptation to make this transformation a debate only about what the latest cutting edge technology is - but rather about focussing on the following outcomes of

1. increased Efficiency, Capacity and Capability for MPs - in responding to citizens, legislation and Executive oversight,
2. Increased participation of the citizen and ,
3. Increase trust, transparency, responsiveness of Parliament as Institution.

So approach goes more than just using twitter, facebook and other social media to broadcast information and views. It goes to a broader development of platforms that bring Parliament and citizens closer in terms of communication.

Quick summary for what we are doing

1. Firstly, enabling representatives and citizens - making the public rep or her the Technology and innovation agent rather than conventional image of a public representative as a laggard in innovation.

That approach starts with every public representative being Tech enabled with tools and training. Our parliamentary secretariat ensures that ipads and laptops are available to all elected reps and there are training programs to use them and the underlying databases/platforms. A new Digital Legislative system enables Representatives to be more efficient in their legislative work - All their filings are now online which includes, Fully interactive websites for both houses, members portal, e-notice etc.

Digitally enabling Parliament is only fully effective if citizens are also online. So While India is one of worlds largest connected countries , it still is one of the largest unconnected citizenry. In the last 4 years or so, We have rapidly grown to about 400Mln Internet connected citizens and hopefully by 2022 which would be our 75th Independence year , we hope to have close to a billion Indians connected to the Internet and therefore connected to their representative, government and legislature - seeking out information, services and accountability.

1. So flowing from that, transforming the connect between Representative to Constituents and creating visibility and reporting of a MPs work in Parliament becomes second part of our strategy - Every member has an portal with all his work updated , for his constituents to see and critique. This has major impact on quality of debates and quality of interventions and indeed in the interaction between constituent and the Parliamentarian.

1. Third goal is of Parliament as an Institution. The cynicism in politics and parliaments amongst the youth is a global problem and indeed a Big risk as future generations are increasingly tuning out of democracy and politics and more so for us because of our unique and large youth demographic. Getting them to believe and trust politics and Parliament is important for ur democracy.

We have created Parliamentary portals and search engines that have digitized the archives and current work of Parliament and Parliamentarians - and make them easily available. Future would be to include public e- consultation of legislation directly through the parliament portal and platform. - Addressing the issue of Representation and participation.

There are plans to take these portals and platforms out to the youth in a way that they tune into politics and find Parliament an Institution they can relate to.

1. Fourth is Parliament as Institution as oversight of Executive - Where PQs are being digitised and made available . Its not unusual to see MPs in India with their realtime research taking on debates with Government Ministers with Data and facts. In a country where legislatures - centre and state have to deliver important goals on poverty , security and other social services - debates and oversight that are based on data and facts are very important to review the performance of the executive. Budgets and other financial data are already online databases, but Indian Parliament is also moving to place social security and spending program data and performance online.

In the future we expect the Parliament platform gateway-ing and interfacing with the myGov governance platform - which is the way Technology is being embedded and transforming decades old way of Governance in India.

We see this transformation and enabling process as not being restricted to the Central Parliament but to move this model once successful into the two other tiers of our democracy - State legislatures and legislators and City/ Village councils and councillors - that is over 700,000 mini and micro legislatures with elected representatives.

In the Indian approach/architecture We fully recognise risks of Technology to Democracy and Security. Risks that range from Fake news impacting democratic process to content that enables security issues to the issue of personal liberty issues arising out of data privacy inadequacies. These issues are being carefully worked on - using a combination of legislation and creating capacities within regulators to deal with these issues - including the most important issue of citizen awareness in mainstream politics and democracy

The present Government and Parliament in India believes technology is THE way to empower the citizen and transform Parliament and democracy for the coming future. Its not a choice but an absolute need to remain relevant. The Parliament of India is firm in its commitment to realise this. As members of Parliamentary fraternity, we should support each other for this transformation of all our Parliamentary Institutions by digitally enabling them.

Thank you.

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