HYDERABAD – Digital Indian Presentation from the Indian Government to the GAC
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THOMAS SCHNEIDER: As you see, the next item on the scenario a presentation that we kindly received from our friends from India that are the hosts of this meeting here in Hyderabad. So I would like to ask our friends from the Indian government to come up here and sit because we will get a presentation about Digital India and ideas and strategies and projects and what the Indian government is doing with regard to supporting the country's way into the digital era. And we're very keen on hearing from you. And, please, for those who do not know you, present yourself, say who you are. Thank you very much.

AJAY KUMAR: Good morning, friends. I'm Ajay Kumar. And I'm returning to the GAC after about one year. I've been part of the GAC meetings about three meetings or so, which I have been part. It's always good to be back. And let me, on behalf of my colleagues here, also welcome you to India. It was our great wish to have the ICANN meeting here and to have the GAC here. And it's really a pleasure to have you here.

RAJIV BANSAL: Good morning, friends. I'm Rajiv Bansal. I'm the present GAC representative from India. Welcome to India. Welcome to ICANN 57 in Hyderabad.

And I'm thankful to the GAC secretariat for having this in-reach activity as well as the outreach activity that we've had one visit on November 3rd and another one on November 9th. Thank you.

JAYESH RANJAN: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Jayesh Ranjan. And I work for the local government here in Hyderabad. And I look after the information technology, electronics, and communications portfolio.

My minister was present in the opening ceremony yesterday. And I'm very glad that it went off very, very well. You had a very productive day yesterday. And I look forward to a very, very good session in the coming few days also.

AJAY KUMAR: Can we have the presentation on Digital India loaded, please.

We have two small presentations which will take about -- first one may take 15-20 minutes, 15 minutes and another about 10-15 minutes. And then we'll be happy to take any questions.

What we would like to share with you is some of the initiatives that are going on as part of Digital India. And, you know, we would be very happy to receive feedback, comments, input from a rich spectrum of experts that are present here who can actually tell us how they are doing some of the similar things in their own countries.

Still settling, so....

Finally it's there.

So this is about -- one of the things that we are trying to see is, as the minister mentioned yesterday in the inaugural session, is how can we use technology to leapfrog -- leapfrog the development process in the country. And that's why it's really a journey of digital transformation.

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So, you know, India has had the privilege of being a significant player in the world as far as I.T. is concerned. In fact, India brand

is very often recognized with I.T. and we have a lot of -- you know, we are number one outsourcing destination.

We are today becoming a very vibrant startup destination, and today we have over 3.5 million direct employment in I.T. sector. We produce about 1.5 million engineers every -- So we have a fairly rich resource base of I.T. Despite this -- and can we have the next slide, please. Next slide, please.

We continue to lag in very important parameters of use of digital technology in the country.

If you were to look at the penetration of computers, the penetration of the per capita data flow, the number of transactions, the e-government index compared to rest of the world, India still lags even on the average with the what the world is, let alone with some of the leading countries in the world.

So we have this interesting paradox of one side, we remain as the number one I.T. destination for other countries. We continue to lag behind a large part with respect to use of I.T. within the country. And it is in this regard that the Digital India program is largely in world focus trying to see how we can use technology within the country.

Next, please.

So the vision of Digital India is to transform India into a digitally empowered society and a knowledge economy. And it is resting on three major pillars: The digital infrastructure, how do you improve the infrastructure to provide more services; the digital services, how do you make more and more services available digitally; and thirdly and very importantly, how do you ensure that the 1.25 billion people, including the people who are on the margins, the weakest and the poorest are also part of this digital transformation.

Next, please.

So let me just quickly talk of some of the major initiatives that have been attempted on these three pillars: the digital infrastructure, the digital services, and the digital empowerment.

On the digital infrastructure, our effort is that digital technology should be universal, it should be affordable, and it should be ubiquitous, 24-by-7.

Next, please. Next.

And one of the programs here is to ensure that optical fiber reaches every village. And as my colleague Jayesh is going to speak about in fact, a lot of state governments have gone further and taken this program right up to the household level. But the

central -- the union government -- the federal government effort is that we reach optical fiber to every village so that all kinds of services can be seamlessly provided to the grassroot level.

This involves providing -- there are about 250,000 clusters of villages in India, and the total investment involved in this project is about 5 billion.

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The second major program is given the fact that we still have a reasonably low penetration of computers in the country, access still remains a challenge. We launched an ambitious program where there are kiosks, what are called as common service centers, throughout the country. Every village has -- Our aim is -- today we have about 200,000 kiosks spread in about 130,000 villages. Our aim is that each of the 250,000 village should have at least one kiosk.

These kiosks have become -- These are -- These kiosks have been developed on a private-public partnership. There are village-level entrepreneurs who run these kiosks, and they provide a myriad of services, including government to citizen services, business to citizen services, consumer to citizen services. And over the last couple of years, they have become vibrant centers of digital access in the various places where they exist.

Next, please.

One of the programs which has been very unique and has, in India, about the program for digital identity. India embarked on the first online real-time, unique, life-long identifiable digital identity, biometric digital identity program.

Today we have issued over 1.06 billion biometric identities for individuals. And what it enables you to do in a less than a fraction of a second, the identity of any individual at marginal cost, which is near zero.

This is one of the cheapest online identification system which has been developed in any part of the world. And with adult coverage of over 99%, it is effectively being used for millions of transactions already. In fact, just to give you an example, previously getting a new SIM card for a mobile phone used to take several days because the identity of the user had to be known.

In the recent phenomena which most of the people in India know, when Reliance Jio came up with their new program, a SIM is available in about two to three minutes because they are extensively using online identification.

A lot of mobile wallets and other people are using this technology and are able to deliver services instantaneously.

Next, please.

The second, again, something new technology which has been started in India is the e-sign together, leveraging the usual public-private key infrastructure.

Today the e-sign technology enables people to use their biometrics to digitally sign any document. And again here, the great advantage is the cost in India -- typically, a digital signature, dongle-based digital signature used to cost something like 15 to $20 a year. That cost has come down to less than one cent -- one cent a signature per dollar.

Why this is very important for us was that while it would be very difficult to expect people who are, you know, of low and middle class and other people to afford a digital dongle, e-sign technology enables that every single individual in the country today can electronically sign any application or document. So if he needs to apply for social benefits from the government, we can today ask him to digitally sign and apply for it. The access -- the accessibility of digital technology has actually become much greater.

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The third, another unique initiative which is built up on our year two is infrastructure of what we call the digital locker. This is nothing but providing a private space in public cloud to every citizen in the country. But the unique difference is that what it allows is that assures of document. And, you know, whether it is universities issuing degrees or educational qualifications, whether it is banks issuing financial instruments, or insurance companies, hospitals issuing medical records, government authorities issuing various certificates or entitlement documents, driving licenses, et cetera, these are automatically pushed electronically into the digital locker of the citizen. And consequently, thereafter, if the citizen has to share these documents with any other person, either for the purpose, let's say, of seeking admission to another university or to seek with an employer or whatever you have, he can do so as we do for, you know, sharing any other documents on the cloud.

But here, the big difference is since the source of these documents are the original issuers of those documents, these documents, when shared from the issuer's repository, are equal to original documents being issued and not those which are actually owned by the citizen.

Consequently, thereafter, the recipient organization has no need to ask the citizen to produce any other certified or other copies.

This has the -- And Aadhaar is the biometric identity infrastructure, the e-sign and the digital locker has created an infrastructure, digital infrastructure, which is, at fast pace, helping us to move towards a paperless, faceless interaction with the government. In fact, the digital locker infrastructure is open for the private sector, and they're adopting it by pushing a lot of documents which they need to share from insurance companies like banks and other people.

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Next.

The third important part is India, incidentally, is one of the countries which is where the percentage of cash in transactions is one of the highest in the world, and the transformation here that we are trying to achieve is how do we move to cashless system so that there is less black money, there is more accountability into the system.

And three major things have been done. The first has been using, as part of Digital India, in the last one and a half years, over 250 million bank accounts have been opened to those, before those people who did not have bank accounts. So they have been brought under the fold of banking system. And this was again possible because of the infrastructure of Aadhaar, the biometric identity, and the use of other digital technologies.

The second thing is that the government has created -- mandated that all government statements, central government payments, receipts and payments shall be in electronic mode. Today, no payment -- and I will not say no payment, but progressively, about over 95% of payments outside of -- going out of consolidated fund of India are being made electronically. And this is being extended as well.

And third is that we have created a unified payment interface which, like Aadhaar, enables one form of electronic payment, whether it is credit card, whether it is core banking, whether it is any various kind of electronic payment gateways to talk to each other so that no matter in what kind of electronic transaction you are doing, citizens can seamlessly transact between two different accounts.

Next, please.

We have already strong open data policy in the country, and a lot of government data is being put onto this open data platform. We are among the top ten countries in the world where data is put on the open data platform with over 40,000 databases.

This, we hope -- And this is enabling a lot of companies to create value-added services around common data.

Next, please.

We are actively promoting the use of cloud both within the government and outside the government. And this is again being largely driven through a public-private partnership. Private cloud players have been impaneled for the use of public sector.

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And we have a program to create 100 smart cities in the country. This is largely driven through the local initiative of the city governments, but a lot of technology, especially IoT, is being actively used to drive this. And the government role -- the government's role is to support the frameworks that will create this IoT driven smart cities in the country.

Next, please.

Let me now talk about the digital services, and that is largely our focus is we have -- everyone -- all of us have been trying to create more and more e-services over the last decade or so. Our focus now is how do we minimize the interface, physical interface, between the citizen and the government. He need not have to come to any government office, need not have to speak to any government official to get a service. So make these services faceless, paperless, cashless.

Next, please.

Next slide, please.

And one of the, you know important transformational exercise in the agricultural sector. Our government has been very focused that the services should also be making differences in the -- for the poor and the deprived. The digital divide is kind of an imperative which is inbuilt within Digital India, and agriculturists, (indiscernible) farmers are very often on the other side of the divide. They have been one of the focus areas of seeing how Digital India can benefit them.

In India, we have a very unique system of agricultural markets in a lot of clusters of villages, and farmers were bound to actually sell their produce to these local markets which had started creating monopolies, and the bargaining power of the farmer had come down significantly. He was only able to sell in his local market where certain, you know, people were -- could catalyze and buy his produce. And in the end, what a farmer would get would be maybe one-fourth of the market price or so.

What has been attempted is to combine all these local markets, over 500 local markets, what we call mundies, into a single national e-marketplace. With the launch of this, already we have now got near over 200 such markets which have come and joined this e-marketplace, as a result of which, India has become

a single agriculture market for the farmers. A farmer sitting in Telangana can sell his produce in Delhi or vice versa.

Next, please.

The other initiative has been for government to start transferring social benefits directly to the accounts of the citizen. This, I mentioned, is -- apart from the fact that it is bringing cashless, it has significantly reduced the overheads in the distribution of government benefits.

Also, it has also created far better transparency and, you know, ensuring that the actual -- the amount actually gets delivered to the citizen and does not remain in the hands of the intermediaries.

Over 325 million beneficiaries accounts are being credited under the direct benefit transfer scheme, and 78 schemes have so far been integrated as part of this.

We have identified over 500 different government schemes under which direct benefit is made to citizens.

And, progressively, this number is going to go up. And even with the amount of work we've done as the minister made in his speech yesterday, I think, or in one of the conferences, there are merely $6 billion of money has been saved by the government by doing that benefit transfer.

Next slide, please.

Another very, very recently we are attempting to do this. And, to best of our knowledge, this has also not been attempted anywhere else in the world. And that is a transformation in government procurement. We all have been part of government, go through the normal tender process where we have the two states, three state qualification criteria. And we know that government procurement is one of the most cumbersome processes and not possibly the most efficient processes. Businesses are able to do this far more effectively and much more faster manner.

We are attempting to use technology to disrupt the normal way of government procurement while ensuring transparency. And the effort here is to create ee-marketplace for government procurement, create an Amazon or a flip card for making sure that the vendors are able to transparently and dynamically change the prices and the procuring department is able to procure at the lowest price at any given point of time.

This has been piloted recently in July 2016. And we hope to scale it up going forward.

Next, please.

We have major programs to use technology in the courts. And all the Supreme Court, 24 high courts in India, the 600 district courts and over 16,000 subordinate courts have been covered as part of use of technology. You can understand the status of case and other such details through this process.

Next slide, please.

We are going through a process -- we are creating one of the biggest transformation in a tax network. We have today states and centers have multiple taxes, and states have their own set of multiple taxes. All of these have been subsumed into a goods and services tax. And, to support this, which, basically, works on a valley-added system, a lot of countries across the world already have it. But, given the complexity and diversity of India, this was a real challenge. A public decision to do GST has been taken. But GST cannot happen unless it is backed by a very strong backbone of technology. Because, when goods move from various states to state and various players along the distribution chain, the value addition at each level needs to be computed and apportioned among the different players. And that has been done technologically through the GSTN Network which has been set up.

Next, please.

Income tax filing is something today we are proud to say nearly a large number of income tax is defined electronically.

Next, please.

And, given the fact that we have local penetration of computers, mobile remains the single largest way. And mobile apps remain the largest -- the single best way of reaching to the citizens.

Next, please.

We also have India Railways is one of our largest government e-commerce platforms doing over 15 million transactions per month.

Next, please.

Let me conclude with a few slides on digital empowerment and ee-participation. We realize that all the transformation on Digital India would not be complete if everyone is part of it. And some of the initiatives in this regard are as follows.

Next, please.

MyGov is a very unique social media platform which enables democracy to be on a daily basis, enable people to participate in governance on a daily basis. It enables citizens to come forward and give views on policy initiatives, government programs and also do tasks which are part of the governmental programs.

Nearly 4 million people are regularly subscribing to this platform. And this is being run directly by our Prime Minister, Mr. Modi. This has also become a great crowd sourcing program for a platform for a lot of government initiatives.

Next, please. Next, please.

We also have a major digital literacy program to ensure that the people who are not digitally literate become part of it. Over 60 million people have been trained as part of this. Our target is at least one person in every household should be digitally literate.

Next, please.

And, given the fact that we are a very language rich country we have 22 official languages, over 400 spoken languages we are pursuing a very -- it's very high on a priority to pursue an agenda where content is available to the people in local languages. We greatly appreciate the support we have received from GAC and from ICANN with respect to the IDNs that have been approved. We have now IDNs for practically all our 22 languages. 15 have been approved and remaining are in the process of being approved.

Next, please.

In the last 1 1/2 or two years since the digital program has been reached, there have been some encouraging -- you know, responses.

Just to share a bit about this -- next, please. Next slide, please. There has been significant -- I think the pictures are not coming in this presentation, but I want to share there has been a significant jump in the Internet penetration in the country.

In December 2014 we had 300 million people on the Internet.

Within one year, by December 2015, we had 400 million. And we are confident we'll touch 500 million before December 2015. Compare this -- before 200 to 300 million took 18 months. 100-200 million took three years. And it took a whole of a decade to reach the first 100 million.

So we are seeing an acceleration of more and more people joining the Internet. There has been 115% increase in data usage in the country.

The Figures are not showing up. But, in fact, Cisco recently showed that India is one of the fastest growth rates of data within the country. Next slide, please.

And the figures are not showing up. U.N. e-Government survey. We are 131, and we're now 118. There is a significant jump in the

last 1 1/2 years within our e-Government ranking within the world.

So I think that's what I have. Next slide, please.

Digital India is really not about digital only. It's about transforming India. Thank you very much for your attention.

(Applause.)

JAYESH RANJAN: Friends, as Dr. Ajay Kumar mentioned, Digital India is based on three pillars of infrastructure, empowerment, and applications. Now, as most of you would be aware, India is a federal country. It has got 29 constituent provinces. All of us are now in the province of Telangana and in its capital City of Hyderabad. So I would like to very briefly share with you how different provinces in the country are taking the Digital India initiative forward. And yesterday our minister was mentioning to you that we have crafted our own program which is called Digital Telangana. I will very briefly explain what are the key features of Digital Telangana which are happening in the overall framework of Digital India.

The first slide, please.

Next slide, please. Yes. Yeah.

So the next one, please.

Yeah, that's the one.

So, on the aspect of creating digital infrastructure, there are four ways in which we are trying to achieve this in Telangana.

As was mentioned yesterday by our minister and now by Dr. Kumar, our endeavor has been to provide optic fiber connectivity to every household in the state.

And we have a province of 9 million households. Some of the villages are pretty remote. They're not easily accessible even by transport connectivity.

But, regardless of where they are located, we are very keen that every household, wherever you are, is connected with an optic fiber cable. In fact, we are told when we embarked on this project that it is perhaps too ambitious. Even the United States of America doesn't have every household covered on the broadband. But we have decided to become the first province in India to take this enormous challenge. But the reason why we are so confident about delivering on this challenge is that we have another very important flagship program in our government which is to provide drinking water to every household. And for that program about 150,000 kilometers of trenches are being laid. And we are using that as an opportunity

to put our cable ducts as well. Typically, we did this as a stand-alone program. Almost 60-70% of the expenditure would have just been to dig the trenches and maybe refill them. On that sense we are able to piggyback almost 60-70% of the costs of this on another scheme of the government. So, therefore, we are confident that every household of Telangana will get broadband connectivity in the next year and a half.

The other way in which we're trying to provide digital infrastructure is to roll out 4G connectivity. As you know, telecom players in India have got licenses to roll out 4G. And our government has made it very, very easy for these telecom providers to conduct their -- to do their activities by providing them easy right of -- by providing them single window clearances, by using some of the knobs through which they can use government property to put their 4G infrastructure. And, as Dr. Kumar mentioned, amongst all the telecom players, Reliance Jio is perhaps the most aggressive. And Telangana right now is almost 95% covered by them. And in another month's time they will achieve 100% coverage of 4G in this province of Telangana. For larger cities, like the City of Hyderabad and a few others, we are also going to provide Wi-Fi throughout the city. So in Hyderabad city, for example, we have identified 3,000 hot spots where Wi-Fi services will be made available to consumers on a free plus payment model.

We're also very conscious that, even if connectivity is provided right in their doorstep, people are not going to start investing in devices immediately. It is not that you get up in the morning, realize that my house is connected, and immediately I shall buy a laptop or smartphone or tablet or so. For hundreds of thousands of people, investing in their device may not be a matter of great priority. It may not be affordable also for some people. Another thing which we are trying to do, which Dr. Kumar mentioned in his presentation in a very, very robust way, is to create a digitally powered available kiosk within reach of people. We have 8,750 village councils in the province of Telangana. And our aim is to position one digital kiosk in each of these village councils. And the remarkable thing is that each of these digital kiosks will be operated by a woman entrepreneur from the local area. So this way we're also providing opportunity to 8,750 women to become entrepreneurs and to provide these digital services to every villager. And, incidentally, on the 9th, we have offered a village visit program to all of you in which you can visit one of these digital villages to see what is on. Who are these women entrepreneurs who will manage the village kiosks, and what kind of services are they offering? And you'll be amazed to find they offer multiple services. In fact, Telangana today is one province in India which offers more than 350 government services electronically to people. And you'll find that all of them are now being offered at

village level kiosk. We have also empowered these women entrepreneurs to become banking correspondents. So, if you're living in a village, typically access to bank is quite a challenge because we're at a distance easily beyond

25-30 kilometers. Now you can perform all these banking services while living in your village itself with the help of the kiosk and woman entrepreneur. Similarly, government has to make lots of payments to people in villages, welfare payments, wage payments, and so on. Now all those financial transactions are now happening at the village level using these digitally-enabled kiosks as the core architecture.

And, finally, we're also tying up various other services like insurances services, like telemedicine, education, et~cetera using these kiosks. So, while we are attempting to provide connectivity right at the doorstep, for those who won't be able to take it up immediately, there is a facility to avail of these digital services within your village council boundaries.

So this is the way in the state of Telangana our attempt is to provide digital infrastructure, eventually hoping to connects the very last mile also, which is usually a challenge in most of the countries in the world.

On the other side, while we know that creating infrastructure is very important, we also need to create value for that

infrastructure among the people. Otherwise, we'll be delivering a lot without enabling the people or without empowering the people to make use of that supply. So, again, there are two important programs that we deliver. One is the digital literacy program, which Dr. Kumar mentioned. It's a very, very flagship national program of Digital India. Here also our attempt has been the way we have transformed this program is to ensure that at least one member of every household becomes digitally literate. And we have, as I mentioned, 9 million households. So our attempt is to ensure that 9 million people at least are taught digital literacy.

Now some of you would be aware that India as a country still does not have 100% conditional or functional literacy. There are about 1/4 of people who may not be able to read or write in their languages. And many people question that when 1/4 of the population doesn't know how to read and write, you can really teach them how to use computers? And we have any number of examples today where we have shown that it can work that way. Even without knowing how to read and write, you can first learn computers. And reading and writing will come to you later. In fact, the union IT minister, if you recall in his speech, mentioned an inspiring case about a rural woman who wanted to speak to her son who lives abroad. And, therefore, Skype -- just to learn how to use Skype, she became computer literate. That

happened in our province, actually. That was an example he chose to mention from our province, and that woman did not know how to read and write her conventional language. But she became computer literate. And now, obviously, she knows how to read and write. Of course, the literacy programs are for people who are older in age who have missed the bus, so to say. But we have hundreds of thousands of students, children in our schools today. And we want to ensure that, when they become adults tomorrow, they have the computer competencies, computer literacy at their school level itself.

So we have a very ambitious TS class program through which we provide computer literacy from grade 6 onwards to all children in the school.

And in this way we hope that the entire population of Telangana tomorrow in a matter of 2 to 2 1/2 years becomes digitally literate. The last part of our Digital Telangana program is yesterday, if you recall, our minister mentioned that no technology is worth its name if it fails to create a social impact. And our aim has been to ensure that every person in our state, every household, every family in the state receives some kind of digital input which makes a marked difference in his or her life. So we have identified about a half a dozen areas where we are rapidly finding digital solutions. For example, we know that large population of rural India is dependent upon farming. So

we have come across very useful agriculture solutions. Dr. Kumar mentioned about linking the farm produce to marketplaces using the digital platforms. But our solution, which we have tried out in Telangana, is to provide realtime scientific advisories to the farming community on how to manage their crops based on the actual crop situation. And we have used various kinds of a combination of IOT, sensors, and artificial intelligence, machine learning to create a solution which works -- which links farmers wherever they are to the best scientists of the country who have domain expertise in agriculture.

And we have identified similar solutions for making our cities, the administration of the cities become smarter. We have solutions to provide quality healthcare in rural areas and so on and so forth.

So the subsequent slides talk about the details of these applications, but I don't intend to reflect on each of these slides separately. But as an overview, these are the three pillars of Digital India which we are taking forward in this way. On the one hand, we are ensuring a very robust digital infrastructure to ensure that it reaches every household of the state. On the second hand, we are trying to ensure that every person values this technology by becoming digitally literate. And finally, we

are creating applications for areas which matter to people in their day-to-day lives.

And I can tell you that all the 29 states in the country are, today, are creating, crafting their own programs to support Digital India. And eventually as our minister spoke yesterday, as Dr. Kumar spoke a while ago, it will be that the next big revolution on the information technology world in the Internet space, India becomes the front runner, the leader of that race.

So thank you very much, and we'll be very happy to take questions and offer any clarifications if you require.

Thanks for your patience.

[Applause]

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you very much to our friends from India. And I think this is a very, very interesting -- or these are very, very interesting ways, examples of how to try and use the benefits of these technologies in a particular situation, and also that you showed that in different regions, in different areas, maybe different challenges or different priorities are there.

So I invite you to ask questions, make comments, and use the experience of our colleagues here, that they gained in their

country and in their region to also profit for getting ideas for what you can do in your country or how you can create links also to experience that may be useful for your country.

So please.

Are you behind -- The man with the white -- with the white dress. I'm not sure --

SENEGAL: Senegal.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Senegal. You were sitting elsewhere when I took my notes. So thank you.

So Senegal first.

SENEGAL: Good morning. I am the representative of Senegal. I would like to thank our colleagues of India for their presentations. This is a very interesting program with very rich content.

I would like to know what is it that you are providing through this program in terms of international relations in order to establish some international partnerships? And how do you

maintain support for some countries that have not developed their I.T. sector as much as you have done?

And what can you do in terms of support and how is it possible to develop this program like you have just presented?

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you, Senegal, for your question.

I see that there are a lot of people interested in taking the floor and making contributions to this discussion. I have just realized that we don't have much time. We will soon have a coffee break. So will only be able to give the floor to two or three delegates, but please take advantage of our mailing list to ask more questions. And also, take advantage of other instances during this meeting to approach our colleagues.

I have seen a request from the European Union, Brazil, and China, and Indonesia.

So please try to be brief, no more than one minute; otherwise, we won't be able to cover everything. I won't be able to give the floor to everyone. Thanks for your understanding.

The European Union has the floor.

EUROPEAN UNION: ...our Indian colleagues for this very useful and thorough contribution.

I just wanted to mention that in the context of our European Union-India ICT dialogue, we have had, over many years, very, very useful interactions with the Indian colleagues and the European Union on many of these issues, and it's very reassuring to see how useful and dynamic the activity is in India.

And I just wanted to mention for the benefit of the rest of the GAC colleagues also that we have a very intense and useful cooperation in the area of research and innovation, also in the area of 5G where India has been very active with the European partners, and also in Internet governance, amongst many others.

And because of the term limits, I don't want to speak any longer, but I think we're very encouraged, and I just wanted to reinforce this very important dialogue that exists between European Union and India.

Thank you.

AJAY KUMAR: Thank you, Megan. Thank you for your comments.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Brazil.

BRAZIL: Thank you very much. Thank you for the presentation.

I see that given the territorial amplitude of India that of Brazil, we have -- we share similarities and similar challenges.

I'd like to ask with regards to resources to what extent does -- do these programs rely on -- solely on governmental resources and to what extent do they rely on public-private partnerships?

Thank you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you. The question is noted.

China.

CHINA: Thank you, Chair. I will speak in Chinese.

Just now I listened to the speech of our Indian friend on Digital India. We feel that it is a very good approach, and we also feel that India's program of Digital India is a good one.

Internet has (indiscernible) for economic development, and an instrument to improve the living standard of the people is

enjoying fast development. In China, a lot of researchers, including people from the government, are paying close attention to the Indians' progress in Digital India program.

In China, we are also promoting the Internet Plus and the conversion of industries and the Internet.

In many aspects, China are very similar to India. A lot of the areas in China are still in the development -- in the developing stage. So in many aspects, we could learn from India's experience. And we are very gratitude to the Indian delegate for sharing this information. I was out of the conference room, so I missed some content of the speech, and I'd like to raise a question to the Indian friend.

The Digital India program, what is the investment by the government into this program? And what is the timeline of this program?

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you. We take one more. We take Indonesia.

Thank you.

Please be short.

INDONESIA: Thank you. I would like to congratulate our Indian host for this good, very useful presentations.

It seems to me that in India, you are developing your I.T. from the two sides, one from the central government and one is sort of central government through the ministries and other central government agencies. But also, you are developing the I.T. sector from the local states, from Telangana and as well, of course, from other local states.

Now, I would like to know how you integrate these two program, because you have so many ministries, you have so many agencies, and you have so many states. How can you make sure that all those activities are not, what you call it, similar to each other and will use more funding and not sufficient?

Secondly, I learn from your presentation, you have so many states, so many language, so many -- of course you are so many citizens, of course. And Indonesia is more or less just like that, so I would like to learn from Indian experience for doing your I.T., chairman.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you very much. Since we are going to give some time to our Indian friends to answer and then we have Gema, from

Spain, who is going to say something. I stop here, have to stop here taking in comments.

You have -- As I said, you have the channel to share things on the electronic mailing list. We will have the coffee break, and we have a working group which is called Underserved Regions Working Group. We may discuss about the name, but I'm sure the interest of sharing the experience and the ideas and also the outcomes, what works, what does not work, would be something that I would recommend everybody to pick up in that working group, because I think that's an efficient way. We have the structure exactly for issues like this to share information and experience that allow people to advance. And so I encourage you to actually -- in particular, the chairs of that working group, the co-chairs, to take this on and see how you can make most benefit and profit for all those interested of experiences and plans like the one we just presented.

So with this, I'm going to give the floor to you to respond very briefly to some of the questions, or to all the questions if you get there.

AJAY KUMAR: So let me thank all our colleagues here for their very valuable comments. And really speaking, it's a learning process. This is one place where we are learning from each other all the time.

And on our part, we are more than happy to share with any other country whatever we have been doing, and if they find it useful in their own respective countries, we are more than happy to share experience, particularly in reference to the comment from our colleague from Senegal.

There was a couple of questions on investment. Let me just make it very -- I wanted to make this distinction clear that Digital India is not about the union government or the state government. It is about India. It is about transforming India. And we are very conscious of it.

So we are really trying to create the enabling environment. The businesses, the people, the states, the cities, the city municipal cooperations, all are partners to it.

So while we are responsible for what we do in terms of central services and the states are responsible for what they do with respect to the state services, really what we are trying to do is everyone, whether businesses that use technology to empower they'll through the use of technology, technology should become the way of life of people. And that's why it's well beyond merely being part of government of India.

On investments, let me say this. So today, it's -- you know, I can share this, you know, that the important thing is this has been driven from the top. The Prime Minister himself is leading the

Digital India program. And, you know, one of the first presentations we made to the Prime Minister, he mentioned, you know, so after presentation there was budget projected. It's very difficult to make exact predictions. Each scheme has a certain investment requirement, and then it keeps changing from time to time. But then we made -- you know, when we made the Digital India program one and a half years back and we first time made the presentation to the Prime Minister and we had an ambitious number there, and he said -- and there were the people from finance ministry and all of us know what finance ministry does is just to cut it, cut down everything. The Prime Minister said that this program should not suffer for want of investment, because I'm convinced that whatever investment goes into this program will come back many fold to the country. So under no circumstances should this suffer from want of investment.

But honestly speaking, we believe that for every program that we actually implemented -- I mentioned DVT where we have done assessment of funds saved -- I think every program, we have saved more money than we have invested.

Last point on this is that we are working very closely in a PPP framework, public-private partnership. A lot of our government schemes are along with industry. And so -- you know, you have seen the e-visa. Maybe some of you will have available the e-

visa. We have an e-passport scheme which works with the TCS, the cloud which is now provided by cloud service providers, and the rest of it.

So it's a shared investment over a period of time, but really speaking, this is -- what's most important is whenever the question is, technology should be the way to do things rather than just be an optional way to do things. It should be the primary way to do things and that's where we're taking it.

I think -- I hope I've addressed all the questions but I think because of want of time, I'd be happy to take any additional questions in the coffee break.

I may be leaving, but I think Rajiv is going to be here. So he knows all about it, too, so please don't let him go until he answers all your questions. And Jayesh, of course, is the local host.

And a very -- you know, I must say this on behalf of government of India, that government of Telangana has been doing some wonderful work, work in division of Digital India at the state level, and I think we are also trying to seek, encourage other states also to similarly adopt this pattern.

So thank you once again. Thank you, GAC, for having us here and letting us share some of the work we are doing in India with the help of, you know, technology.

Thank you.

[Applause]

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you all. I think this applause is highly merited.

Before we let you go, our vice chair from Spain, Gema, would like to just address a few words to you.

Thank you.

GEMA CAMPILLOS: Thank you, Chairman.

I was one of the colleagues that joined the remarkable local outreach activity that the government of Telangana has offered us. And I would like, in the name now of the GAC leadership team and, as well, on behalf of the GAC members and observers, to thank the government of the Telangana state for organizing the first ever local outreach activity for the GAC, and for graciously taking charge of transportation to the respective locations.

The visit to the T-HUB incubator and the Indian School of Business was extremely enjoyable and informative. I'm sure that many attendees will carry the ideas they have drawn out of the visit to their home countries and use them to promote similar initiatives or enrich the ones that there may already exist.

Thanks to the T-HUB incubator and the Indian School of Business for welcoming us so warmly. And finally, thank you to our Indian GAC colleagues for liaising with the government of Telangana over the past weeks in order to make this happen.

You have certainly set a precedent for the future where other local outreach activities can be organized. So thank you all, and a big applause for you.

Thank you.

[Applause]

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you. Now this is the coffee break, and the coffee break will not be over until our Indian colleagues have answered all the questions that you have to them. So we'll meet in two weeks' time. Thank you very much.

No. You see in the program when we restart. I think it's 11:00. Thank you.

[Coffee break]