Less Paper Governance /Paperless Governance in Sindhudurg

A Model of Green Governance

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The first thing we see when we enter into the government office is stack of papers and lots of files, piled high on the desks, sometimes it is difficult find a place or to find a person behind those files. Think about the about the people who work every day with these files– creating, retrieving, signing, moving, storing, and searching. Physical file management has been a part of Government since ages. However in this new era of Information technology, Government is shredding these physical files bytes by bytes converting these to digital files and implementing electronic office solution.

If we have a look at some of the facts about the Paper in the office, the revelations are startling. As per a study, on an average, a document is photocopied 19 times. Paper files get doubled every 3.5 years and paper usage in an average office grows 22 percent a year and doubles every 3.3 years which keeps adding to the new filing cabinets and resources to manage these. On an average every 12 filing cabinets require an additional employee to maintain them. A letter has to pass through 41 steps and entered in dozens of the registers before it is answered. Every step just generates more and more paper to be stored, maintained and cared for.

The average time to retrieve and file a paper document is about 10 minutes. Due to the large number of physical files and paper, average search time for any document is 18 minutes and some are never found. Misplacing and losing the files is very common and serious issue and at any given time about 3-5% of organisation's files are lost or misplaced. It is difficult to believe but Large Organizations lose a document every 12 seconds. In organizations where there is lot of paper based work, half of the office's time is spent in handling paper or data entry. In spite of this effort, 92 percent of information is in manila folders. Information technology has made real

headway into day today working and the exchange of information has become faster and reliable but that too is not without woes or one can say side effects. The much hyped e Mail causes about 40% increase in paper consumption as the same has to eventually move to physical files in physical form if the action has to be taken on the issue. In spite of all the advent of new technology over 80% of the information in the Government remains in the paper form.

If we just glance at the environmental repercussions of the usage of the paper, it would be pertinent to note that only 12500 sheets of paper can be made from a fully grown tree. Now translating it into the "green damage", it would be noteworthy that on an average 210 billion sheets of paper are sent by fax every year. Leave aside the other paper usage which if quantified will be sufficient to make one faint, imagining the number of trees that are sacrificed for meeting these requirements. What is more disturbing is that about 95% of this paper will eventually be thrown away.

Protecting the files kept in record rooms from wear and tear and any misuse is another challenge. In any unforeseen event such as fire, no backups are available for the physical files stored. Digitization has come as a remedy for the same but the day today work needed a change that would not only be a historical step but would change the well established paper based working from the times immemorial.

With this background the Revenue Administration at Sindhudurg decided to, Go Green and switch over to a paperless/less paper office and present a fine example of fast, transparent and environment friendly working and to do this we chose the e-Office modules developed by the National Informatics centre, New Delhi.

E-Office a product of National Informatics Center is helping the Government departments go paperless or become offices with less paper. e-Office is aimed at improving internal efficiencies in an organisation through electronic administration. E-Office is workflow software that enables departments to clear, edit or suggest on files on computers connected via a NICNET link, a point-to-point connectivity.

In this paper we will describe the methodology used at Sindhudurg Collector's office in implementing the paperless/less paper office. Activities performed from forming the teams,

business process reengineering, implementation, change management etc. We will also bring out the challenges faced at various stages and how these have been overcome. The Government working basically revolves around three Ds and one F: Dak, Draft, Desk and File. We at Sindhudurg have been able to completely digitize the two Ds and one F: Dak, Draft and File and thereby cleared the Desks of heaps of files and paper.

Sindhudurg has the rare distinction of being the first district in the country to have successfully integrated the entire revenue administration from the Tahsil level to District Collectorate. The two centuries old institution of District Collector has moved into a new era of Governance and Sindhudurg leads this monumental change. Being one of its kinds of districts, Sindhudurg has several other electronic services to their employees and citizens. We invite you to venture into the times of change in Governance and intend to give a glimpse of the e-services in Sindhudurg in this paper.

"We welcome you to the Sindhudurg Model of Governance, the only of its kind in the entire country, breathing new life into the Government working."

Go Paperless… Go Green…