

## Webinar on Blockchain Technology and e-Governance

**Gandhinagar, September 19, 2020:** Webinar on ‘Blockchain Technology and e-Governance’ was organized at Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) the following experts participated in the webinar:

1. Mr Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary, Information Technology, Electronics and Communications Department, Government of Telangana,
2. Dr Manindra Agrawal, Professor of Computer Science and Engineering & Team Leader, National Blockchain Project funded by National Security Council Secretariat,
3. Mr. Anupam Tiwari, Joint Director, Government of India,
4. Mr Adarsh S., Research Scientist and Convener, Kerala Blockchain Academy and
5. Mr. Pulkit Doger, Joint Partner, Lakshmikumaran & Sridharan

Mr Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary, Government of Telangana said that blockchain technology is known for the cryptocurrency but it has much more to offer than a cryptocurrency. It is a very useful tool in areas where there are issues like ambiguity, opaqueness, multiple players, traceability and trust deficit. The immutability of Blockchain technology can bring in a paradigm shift from opaqueness to transparency in governance.

Mr Jayesh Ranjan said that the Government of Telangana has framed a robust blockchain policy and created a Blockchain District wherein founding stakeholders, namely, the state Government of Telangana, Union Government through the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), private sector participant (Tech Mahindra) and an academic institution (IIIT, Hyderabad) are brought on a common platform. The blockchain District functions as an administrative control unit for overseeing the implementation of the blockchain technology for governance in various areas.

Mr Jayesh Ranjan said that the Government of Telangana has launched a **major land record purification project** called “**Dharini**” wherein we have added a strong layer of blockchain security. The existing manual system of land record has many imperfections and leave a room for a lot of mischiefs. The blockchain technology-supported system is transparent, tamper-proof and immutable, and successfully addresses the problems of the conventional system.

Mr Jayesh Ranjan referred to **T-Chits project** for administering chit funds in the State. In T-Chits, the blockchain-based platform captures transactions, verify the data, enable smart and secure transactions to allow automated and trusted financial transactions between all parties involved in Chit Fund businesses across Telangana. T-Chits has transformed the cumbersome process of monitoring Chit Fund transactions by bringing in trust and transparency through Blockchain. T-Chits has been developed by a Blockchain-startup. On the successful implementation of T-Chits in Telangana, many other state governments have approached the developer for a similar solution for

their states. This project has also received the gold award in ‘Excellence in Adopting Emerging Technologies’ during the 23rd national conference on e-Governance 2019-20.

**Educational records** is another area where Telangana is using blockchain technology. Many universities in Telangana are shifting to the maintenance of educational records on the blockchain-supported system and issuing mark-sheets and certificates with blockchain security. This will make every document traceable and verifiable. This will eliminate the menace of forged and fake mark-sheets and certificates.

Mr Jayesh Ranjan said that Telangana is a major pharma hub with 800+ pharma and biotech units. Alongside genuine pharma companies, some rouge units are manufacturing fake medicines. Telangana has put in place the **GS1-compliant supply chain system for real-time tracking and monitoring of cancer-care medicines**. Encouraged by the success of this pilot project, Government of Telangana is currently working on the **replication of the same for the distribution of the vaccine for Covid-19**. This system will be able to track the entire journey of each vial on a real-time basis which will eliminate the chances of fake vaccines finding their way to market. The system will also be able to predict and prevent supply chain failures. **He was hopeful of rolling out a fool-proof supply chain system before the Covid-19 vaccine hits the market.**

Mr Jayesh Ranjan said that the blockchain technology has great potential in many other areas of governance. He said that a **day is not far when we will be casting our vote from home thanks to the blockchain technology-supported solution**. Polling booth visits and all malpractices associated with it will become history. He said this has already become a reality in Estonia. Estonia is the first country in the world to hold nation-wide elections using Internet voting or i-Voting. This system allows voters to cast their ballots from any internet-connected computer anywhere in the world. Compared to the electronic voting systems which involve costly and problematic machinery, the Estonian system is simple, elegant, secure, and saves both the time and cost.

IIT-Kanpur Professor Dr. Manindra Agrawal talked about the **National Blockchain Project** which has been funded by the National Security Council Secretariat to develop e-governance solutions using blockchain technology. The project is currently working on two e-governance applications: Secure healthcare infrastructure and land record management. He said that **land record management will be shortly implemented in Uttar Pradesh on a pilot basis**.

Mr Anupam Tiwari said that the **Government wants to kill bitcoin but loves blockchain which can be used to increase transparency and fight corruption**. He said that blockchain removes middleman between buyer and seller and leads to trustworthiness through unique features of security, authenticity, integrity and transparency.

Mr Adarsh S. said that blockchain can be used for governance in many areas such as public notary service, certificates (birth, death, marriage, education), land record, tender processing, identity management, crime records, evidence management, voting, taxation, community policing, real estate, insurance, energy grids, farm produce organizations, telecom, airline, tourism and legal services. He said that blockchain has a great future and added that **IBM dedicates US dollar 200 million and 1000 employees to blockchain-powered projects**.

Mr Adarsh said that the Kerala Blockchain Academy has developed blockchain-based solutions: Certichain, Agrochain, Swasthyachain, Skillchain and Immunochain.

- (1) Certichain is a Blockchain-powered solution for Academic Institutions and other certificate-issuing bodies to issue the certificates onto Blockchain and anyone can verify the authenticity of the same in one click. CertiChain eliminates the need for background verification of certificates.
- (2) Agrochain is a platform for enabling/nurturing crowd-sourced, virtual cooperative entities for supply chain financing in the agricultural sector.
- (3) Swasthyachain is Blockchain-Powered Universal Health Record Management System. Each citizen becomes owners of their data with a Blockchain-based identity which could grant permission to doctors for accessing their medical records as and when required.
- (4) Skillchain is a platform providing resume management for migrant/unorganized labourers. Skillchain is a decentralized blockchain application which directly connects interstate migrant workers with potential employers.
- (5) Immunochain is a project by Kerala Blockchain Academy, IIITM-K, jointly supported by DBT, BIRAC and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation under the Grand Challenges India – Immunization Data: Innovating for Action. Immunochain RCH Book is a digital form of RCH Book which provides mother and child beneficiary details. The beneficiary details which are collected during the registration includes family details, pregnancy-related details and service provider details. The RCH user can view these beneficiary details. The RCH Book provides vaccination details of the child which includes details about vaccines taken and the vaccines missed. By using the app the RCH user can easily identify the vaccines which are taken and vaccines which are missed. The RCH Book is accessible by scanning the QR code of the beneficiary and by entering the OTP received in the registered mobile number.

Earlier, GNLU Director Dr Shanthakumar welcomed the distinguished speakers and thanked them for accepting the invitation to share their knowledge with students. Dr Thomas Mathew, Head of GNLU Centre for Law and Technology proposed a vote of thanks.

The webinar was organised under the aegis of the GNLU Centre for Law and Technology in collaboration with Gujarat Council on Science and Technology, Department of Science and Technology, Government of Gujarat.

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