



## EDITORIAL COMMENT

COVID 19 has mainstreamed several new expressions - contact tracing, surveillance, flattening the curve, social distancing, lockdown, and calibrated unlocking. While these terms appear simple and straight forward, actually implementing them is quite another matter, and entails rather rigorous and scientific data analytics. How does one do predictive analysis, learn from the past to anticipate the future, even in data constrained circumstances? This is where Big Data analysis and the imaginative use of proxy data assumes importance. They provide a window to the future, enable simulation of scenarios, and hence help policy makers make meaningful policy decisions. The Government of India has consciously focussed on developing policy plans to use data analytics, artificial intelligence and machine learning to advance strategic and innovative development governance; as well as to help such initiatives to grow and succeed.

COVID-19, provides the challenge to enhance the use of data science and data analytics. The importance of data in research has come to the fore, where if applied correctly and intelligently, predictions can be made effectively. The Government of Karnataka has strongly endorsed and acknowledged this. The state's response to the COVID 19 pandemic and to find and implement real-time solutions, is praiseworthy. The efficiency of the public health system, the coherence in policy responses, and coordinated action has enabled the state to contain the spread of the virus and mitigate the case fatality rate, significantly, and not least because of leveraging the power of data science applications.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW



**Sri Rajeev Chawla**  
*Additional Chief Secretary  
E-Governance  
Government of Karnataka*

**Q:** *How is Open data provided by Karnataka Open Data Initiative (KODI) and other entities such as Open Government Data Platform (OGD) useful in the policy making process?*

**A:** As we know, Open data is data that is available for anyone to access, use or share and often pertains to information which are socio-economic in nature. This data is usually available in open formats to facilitate, use, reuse and redistribute among citizens, government and businesses. It usually is non-personal and can be used to identify and predict large-scale trends, statistics and behaviours. Open data supports policymaking process in a variety of ways. It aids in government decision making in such a way that lawmakers and bureaucrats are able to assess and analyse vast amounts of available data to understand the current state of affairs related to any particular domain or area and craft policies and legislations that are supportive for further development or improvement of demography. Agriculture would be an excellent example for this. Data available on farming, farmers and other aspects of agriculture enables government to come up with policies and schemes aimed at aiding farming and for improving the agriculture sector as a whole. Open data also improves transparency and accountability and helps to reduce corruption. It helps effective tracking of policies and related impact on general population.

**Q:** *How would you envisage a symbiotic relationship between CODR and e-governance initiative?*

**A:** Core mission of CODR is "To empower organisations to effectively interpret open data and apply data driven insights to progress human development and citizen's customer experience". E-Governance initiative is aimed at facilitating rapid and effective use of information technology for common man, providing citizen centric services and deliver various e-governance projects that are useful for more than one department. E-Governance initiatives are highly dependent on open data sets related to state's citizens and their related aspects. Additionally, CODR brings in advance data capabilities such as a data science, machine learning and analytics to further analyse data which then can be taken as inputs for planning and executing e-Governance initiatives and delivering schemes or programmes aimed at improving wellness for state's citizens.

**Q:** *How is the Centre for e-Governance (CeG) planning to leverage Master Data Management (MDM) capabilities to deliver value to its citizens?*

**A:** CeG plans to use MDM capabilities to understand and document attributes of its citizen to a level where it can proactively provide services, aid and grants, based on socio economic factors and conditions. Very often departments will require information from other departments to provide a service to its citizens and this warrants the need for having a common data repository with bridging capabilities across departments. Having a clear understanding and view of its citizens would help the state to better plan its schemes, provide faster dissemination of benefits and easier tracking during emergencies such as a pandemic or a natural disaster. MDM will offer this single view of a citizen and help accomplish the aspirational objectives of having a 360-degree view of citizens, thereby enabling CeG and rest of the Government to proactively serve its citizens with ease of access and without any manual intervention.

**Q:** *How can analytics and AI/ML help CeG in proactively service state's citizens?*

**A:** Once Citizen related data is collected and curated for use, advance analytics capabilities can be applied to this data set to understand various patterns and trigger points. Establishing triggers based on various criteria such as date of birth, caste, education, occupation etc. can enable the capability to perform "next best action". Examples of this could be an individual getting automatic pension once he has retired from his job, or deciding beneficiaries for a particular scheme based on a set of pre-determined parameters, which can then be processed automatically. Using such advance capabilities will also help eliminate irregularities or illegal/duplicate applications and service requests.



## PUBLICATION REVIEW

In a report titled, COVID - 19 A Macroeconomic Management Plan: Recommendations to the Government of Karnataka and published by Public Affairs Centre (PAC) the framework to address the three key elements of macroeconomic management in times of crisis - public finance management needs, calibration of exit strategy, and the macroeconomic interventions required to bring economic activity to near normalcy - was proposed.

In brief, the report made four types of recommendations:

- Expenditure Reprioritisation
- Additional revenue generation
- Exit strategy action
- Labour and Employment measures.

Using data analysis and data science the report also points to the challenges the state will likely be faced with:

- Strengthening public medical care facilities to meet the specific treatment needs arising from the rising number of COVID-19 cases, and in the event of an uncontrolled outbreak
- Ensuring that the lockdown is implemented successfully and smartly
- Maintaining the supply chains of essential commodities
- Ensuring that the migrant workers rendered jobless by the lockdown return to their villages
- Cushioning the economic impact
- Ensuring the public finance fall-out is staggered and fiscal stress is minimised.

*For more details read [here](#).*



## NEWS

In a meeting held on Friday, June 12, 2020 between the Department of Planning, Program Monitoring and the CODR important decisions were taken:

- Analyse the trends and patterns of mortality in Karnataka to:
  - Identify talukas with high mortality rates
  - Undertake trend analysis and ringfence the talukas with consistently high mortality rates in the last 5 years
  - Identify and undertake trend analysis of diseases contributing to the highest mortality rates in each of these talukas
  - Mapping the disease burden with the health care facilities extant.
- Provide the final analysis of COVID 19 related grievances on 15/6/2020
- Request access to the Khajane 2 database to map coverage of social scheme benefits with deprived households.

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