

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION No.\*22**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 03.02.2023

**FEMALE INTERNET USERS IN INDIA**

**\*22 SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA:**

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware that as per a recent National Family Health Survey (NFHS), among the total internet users in India, only 29 per cent of them are female;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and whether Government plans to bridge this gap, especially for women in rural areas;
- (c) whether Government is aware that while more than 85 per cent of women have access to smartphones in Goa, Sikkim, and Kerala, less than 50 per cent of women have it in States like Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

- (a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO RAJYA SABHA STARRED  
QUESTION NO.\*22 FOR 03.02.2023 REGARDING  
FEMALE INTERNET USERS IN INDIA**

.....

(a) and (b): The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare periodically conducts the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) to collect crucial data on population, health and associated domains. As of now, five rounds of NFHS have been conducted in the country during 1992-93, 1998-99, 2005-06, 2015-16 and 2019-21. As per the survey report the Female internet users in India stands at 51.8% (urban), 24.6% (rural), and, 33.3% (total). As per the May 2022 survey report of National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), for the period 2019-21, 33.3 percent of women in 15-49-year age group in India have used the internet.

Government has taken various initiatives to bridge this gap, especially for women, in the rural areas namely:-

**Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA):**

The Government of India has launched a scheme in 2017, to usher digital literacy in rural India to cover 6 crore rural households (one person per household) by 31.03.2023. To ensure equitable geographical reach, each of the 2,50,000 Gram Panchayats across the country are envisaged to register an average of 200-300 candidates.

In the scheme, digitally literate persons are able to operate computers/digital access devices like tablets, smart phones, etc., send and receive emails, browse internet, access Government Services, search for information, undertake cashless transactions, etc.

Under this scheme, as on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023, a total of around 6.69 crore candidates have been enrolled and 5.77 crore have been trained, out of which 4.28 crore candidates have been certified by duly authorized 3<sup>rd</sup> party Assessment Agencies.

Out of the total certified candidates, around 2.42 crore beneficiaries are female (approx. 56% of the total certification).

**Women participation in Common Service Centres (CSCs)**

Government is encouraging women members of self –help group to become Village Level Entrepreneur (VLEs) to setup CSCs. CSCs are the access points of the delivery of various electronic services to villages in India. Women VLEs are 71,483 across the country.

**IT for Masses programme**

Government is aimed at narrowing the digital divide by initiating/promoting activities in the field of Electronics & IT through IT Infrastructure Creation, Deployment of IT tools, Skill Development Training, Capacity Building & Entrepreneurship Creation activities in IT domain. The programme caters exclusively for the benefit/development of focus groups i.e. Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, Women, Senior Citizen and Differently Abled. 5.55 lakh women have been benefitted under this programme.

(c) and (d): As per the fifth round of National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), 2019-21 the percentages of women between age 15-49 years who have mobile phone in the states of Goa, Sikkim, Kerala, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh are mentioned in the table below:

<b>India, States/UTs</b>	<b>Women age 15-49 years who have a mobile phone that they themselves use (%)</b>
<b>India</b>	<b>53.9</b>
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	80.8
Andhra Pradesh	48.9
Arunachal Pradesh	76.4
Assam	57.2
Bihar	51.4
Chandigarh	70.0
Chhattisgarh	40.7
DNH & DD	60.5
Goa	91.2
Gujarat	48.8
Haryana	50.4
Himachal Pradesh	79.5
Jammu & Kashmir	75.2
Jharkhand	49.0
Karnataka	61.8
Kerala	86.6
Ladakh	81.2
Lakshadweep	84.0
Madhya Pradesh	38.5
Maharashtra	54.8
Manipur	72.2
Meghalaya	67.5
Mizoram	82.3
Nagaland	82.5
NCT of Delhi	73.8
Odisha	50.1
Puducherry	82.8
Punjab	61.2
Rajasthan	50.2
Sikkim	88.6
Tamil Nadu	74.6
Telangana	60.0
Tripura	53.1
Uttar Pradesh	46.5
Uttarakhand	60.9
West Bengal	50.1

\*\*\*\*\*

