GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3969
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04/04/2025

GROWTH OF VILLAGE e-COMMERCE FOR STRENGTHENING RURAL ECONOMY

3969   SMT. JEBI MATHER HISHAM:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a)   the steps taken to accelerate the growth of Village E-Commerce as a catalyst for strengthening the rural economy;
(b)   whether Government will launch a special mission to enhance the marketing of rural agri-products using Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), the details thereof;
(c)   measures implemented to transform villages into hubs of resources and knowledge through ICT;
(d)   whether Government has identified key challenges faced by rural entrepreneurs in adopting e-commerce platforms, along with the steps being taken to address these challenges;
(e)   the initiatives in place to improve digital literacy and internet connectivity in rural areas to support village e-commerce expansion?

ANSWER
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(DR. CHANDRA SEKHAR PEMMASANI)

(a) to (c):   The Ministry has taken steps to accelerate the growth of village e-Commerce, for consolidation of the rural economy. The Ministry has launched an e-Saras portal in year 2022 for online marketing of Self-Help Group (SHG) products as a marketing initiative under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana- National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM). The portal is facilitating direct market access for SHGs through e-commerce. e-Saras has achieved initial milestones, including over 34 lakh product sales and are delivering more than 8,000 products to 30 States/UTs, making rural products accessible across country. Further, the Ministry in collaboration with Government e-Marketplace (GeM) has created "SARAS Collection" as a Store Front in GeM for marketing of SHG products. Also, Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) have been entered between Ministry and Flipkart Internet Pvt. Ltd., Amazon and Fashnear Technologies Pvt. Ltd. (Meesho) respectively to allow the SHGs producers including the artisans, weavers and craftsmen to access national markets through the Flipkart Samarth programme, Amazon Saheli initiative and Meesho for marketing of SHGs products. An MoU has also been signed between MoRD and JioMart for onboarding and marketing of SHGs products. The Ministry has converged with ONDC for promotion and sales of rural women SHG products on ONDC platform. Some States have also developed their own e-Commerce platform to support marketing of products of SHGs.

        SHGs products are now available on various platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, JioMart, Meesho, and GeM. Concurrently, digital marketing efforts are focused on building awareness for Saras Aajeevika.

(d):   Some major challenges being faced by rural entrepreneurs in adopting e- commerce platforms and steps taken to address them are as under:

S. No.	Challenges	Steps
1	Lack of awareness about e-commerce operations - Product packaging, Pricing, Quality, Fulfillment etc.)	Trainings have given to more than 4500 SHGs Members.
2	Inadequate internet connectivity	The BharatNet project of Ministry of Communications aims to provide broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs) in country, in a phase manner.
3	Logistical hurdles	eSaras onboarded 2700 plus products from 170 SHGs on eSaras portal and fulfilling customer orders from it's fulfilment centre.

(e):   Various training programmes under DAY-NRLM have been conducted to onboard SHG members under DAY-NRLM on eCommerce Platforms like GeM, ONDC, Amazon, Flipkart, Meesho, JioMart etc.

Under Digital India Initiative, various technology-led startups and innovation schemes like Technology Incubation and Development of Entrepreneurs (TIDE 2.0), Gen-Next Support for Innovative Startups (GENESIS), domain specific Centres of Excellence (CoEs) and Next Generation Incubation Scheme (NGIS) have been undertaken. Also, BharatNet Project, which connects rural areas with Optical Fibre Cable, and USOF (Universal Service Obligation Fund) schemes that bring 4G services to remote villages have been implemented by Ministry of Communications to expand broadband access. These initiatives also support village e-commerce expansion.

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