GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2011
ANSWERED ON 06.08.2025

IMPACT OF DIGITAL INITIATIVES

2011 SHRI AYODHYA RAMI REDDY ALLA:

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to State:

(a)   how does the Ministry plan to assess the impact of eGramSwaraj and SVAMITVA on rural governance and property rights and what strategies are in place to scale up these initiatives to cover all rural areas, ensuring seamless integration with existing governance structures and maximizing benefits for rural citizens; and

(b)   the steps taken or proposed to be taken to ensure the security and privacy of sensitive data collected through digital initiatives like eGramSwaraj and SVAMITVA, particularly in rural areas where digital literacy and infrastructure may be limited?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PANCHAYATI RAJ

(PROF. S.P. SINGH BAGHEL)

(a) The Ministry has adopted a multi-pronged approach to assess the impact of its flagship digital initiatives eGramSwaraj and SVAMITVA on rural governance and property rights, while also laying down strategies to ensure their scale-up and integration with existing governance structures.

Under the eGramSwaraj initiative, the Ministry continuously strives to enhance the effectiveness and impact of the e-Panchayat Mission Mode Project (MMP) by leveraging emerging technologies and adopting a consultative, feedback-driven approach. Regular feedback is collected from users at various levels, including through regional workshops and stakeholder consultations, to identify areas of improvement and prioritize future developments. Regional workshops have been held in Shimla(24 February 2023), Hyderabad(19-20 January, 2023), and Guwahati(10 February 2023), while focused stakeholder interactions have taken place in Maharashtra (02 February, 2024) and Lucknow(08 December 2023). An industry consultation event, Manthan, was also organized in New Delhi (30 January, 2023) to ideate on a roadmap for strengthening e-Governance applications. In addition, several online meetings have been convened with

State Governments to ensure continuous engagement. These efforts have led to growing digital adoption at the grassroots level, improved transparency in planning and accounting, and enhanced efficiency in service delivery by Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

For the SVAMITVA Scheme, an impact evaluation was conducted in 2020–21 through the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) in six pilot States Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand. The Scheme, implemented in collaboration with 31 States/UTs, has achieved drone survey completion in 3.23 lakh out of the targeted 3.45 lakh inhabited villages. Further, 2.63 crore property cards have been prepared for 1.73 lakh villages. SVAMITVA aims to provide rural property owners with accurate Records of Rights, thereby strengthening rural governance by enabling property-based bank loans, facilitating property tax assessment for enhancing local revenue, resolving land disputes, and supporting better rural planning through GIS-based maps and survey infrastructure.

To scale up these initiatives and ensure seamless integration with existing governance structures, the Ministry is working closely with State Governments to expedite drone surveys, complete property card distribution, and align these digital initiatives with ground-level administrative and development planning processes, thus maximizing benefits for rural citizens.

(b) To ensure the security and privacy of sensitive data collected through digital initiatives such as eGramSwaraj and SVAMITVA, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has taken comprehensive technical and administrative measures, aligned with the security guidelines issued by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and the National Cyber Security Policy of the Government of India. Specifically, for eGramSwaraj, mobile numbers (for SMS communication), email addresses, bank account details, PFMS-related transaction information, and Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) details are collected. To safeguard this sensitive data, the following measures have been implemented:

1. **Data Dissemination and Masking**: All sensitive data published through reports and dashboards (e.g., mobile numbers, email IDs, and bank account details) is appropriately masked to prevent the exposure of personally identifiable information.

2. **Security of Data at Rest**:

   i.   Servers are protected behind firewalls, with strict access controls.

   ii.   Access permissions are role-based and assigned based on operational requirements. Access is allowed only through a secured Virtual Private Network (VPN).

   iii.   Digital Signature Certificates (DSC) and login credentials are stored in hashed, non-reversible, and non-human-readable formats.

   iv.   Password policies are strictly enforced, including mandatory password changes every 3 months and compulsory password reset on first login for new users.

3. **Secure Development and Hosting Practices**:

   i.   Digital payment orders are signed using secure DSC utilities.

   ii.   Secure and updated development libraries and tools are used.

   iii.   Regular vulnerability assessments, OS patches, and infrastructure updates are conducted.

   iv.   The application undergoes periodic security audits in accordance with MeitY guidelines.

   v.   SSL encryption is enforced for all communications; HTTP traffic is automatically redirected to HTTPS.

These measures ensure that the eGramSwaraj platform operates in a secure environment, protecting user data from unauthorized access, leakage, or misuse. All development and hosting are conducted on secure government infrastructure, compliant with MeitY's IT Security Guidelines and the broader digital governance framework.

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