GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1502
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 12.12.2025

INITIATIVES TO EXPAND REACH OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FACILITIES TO RURAL, HILLY AND REMOTE AREAS

1502. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA:

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

(a) the key features of Government's initiatives aimed at expanding the reach of Information Technology across the country;
(b) whether Government has undertaken any measure to ensure that information technology facilities become accessible to citizens living in rural, hilly and remote regions;
(c) if so, the details of these initiatives, including those implemented in the State of Assam and entire Northeast region;
(d) whether Government is taking or planning to take concrete steps for decentralizing information technology services within the country; and
(e) if so, the specific details of those steps?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI JITIN PRASADA)

(a) to (e): In line with Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision to democratise technology and empower citizens, the Government of India had launched the Digital India programme in July, 2015.

The overall goal is to ensure that digital technologies improve the life of every citizen, expand India's digital economy, and create investment and employment opportunities in India.

At its core, the programme promotes three interconnected goals: strengthening digital infrastructure, delivering government services digitally, and empowering citizens through digital literacy and employment.

From expanding internet access in remote villages to revolutionising public service delivery through digital platforms, the country has bridged the urban-rural divide like never before.

Digital India includes many flagship programmes that cut across sectors: DigiLocker for secure document access, Unified Payments Interface (UPI) for cashless transactions, Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG) for accessing digital services through mobile App,

CoWIN for vaccine management, and Government e-Marketplace (GeM) for procurement transparency.

Details of some of the key initiatives taken by the Government to make Information Technology accessible to citizens residing in rural, hilly and remote areas of the country including state of Assam and entire Northeast region are as follows:

- **Common Services Centres –** CSCs are offering government and business services in digital mode enhancing last-mile connectivity in rural areas through Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs). Over **800 services** are being delivered through CSCs. As on October, 2025, **5.67 lakh CSCs** are functional across the country (in rural and urban areas), out of which 4.41 lakh CSCs are functional at the Gram Panchayat level (rural). Details of CSCs in North East region (including Assam) is as below:

Sl. No.	State	Functional CSCs (Urban+Rural)	Functional CSCs at GP level
1	Arunachal Pradesh	240	181
2	Assam	15511	14183
3	Manipur	966	794
4	Meghalaya	1166	1054
5	Mizoram	642	485
6	Nagaland	615	426
7	Sikkim	245	215
8	Tripura	1967	1585

- **PMGDISHA:** The Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) was initiated to make digital literacy reach 6 crore rural households (one person per household) nationwide. **6.39 crore individuals** were trained across the country, making it one of the world's largest digital literacy initiatives. The Scheme has concluded on 31.03.2024. Details of achievements in North East region (including Assam) is as below:

Sl. No.	State	Trained Candidates
1	Arunachal Pradesh	11,615
2	Assam	23,60,195
3	Manipur	18,286
4	Meghalaya	1,06,063
5	Mizoram	23,125
6	Nagaland	8,968
7	Sikkim	23,122
8	Tripura	2,64,186

- **BharatNet-Linking Villages to the Internet:** Department of Telecommunications is implementing BharatNet project to provide broadband connectivity to all the Gram Panchayats (GPs) and villages. The infrastructure created under BharatNet project is a national asset, accessible on a non-discriminatory basis to the Service Providers, and the same can be utilized to provide broadband services, such as Wi-Fi Hotspots, Fibre to the Home (FTTH) connections, leased lines, etc. As of October 2025; **2,14,843 Gram Panchayats (GPs)** have been made service-ready under the BharatNet project. Status of BharatNet in North East region (including Assam) is as below:

S. No.	State	Service ready on OFC	Service ready on Satellite	Total Service ready (OFC + Satellite)
1	Arunachal Pradesh	77	1047	1124
2	Assam	1502	5	1507
3	Manipur	315	1160	1475
4	Meghalaya	122	576	698
5	Mizoram	41	499	540
6	Nagaland	116	120	236
7	Sikkim	26	9	35
8	Tripura	598	142	740

- **FutureSkills PRIME:** To bridge the industry skill gap, MeitY has initiated the 'FutureSkills PRIME' programme in collaboration with the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM). The initiative focuses on skilling, reskilling, and upskilling individuals in new and emerging technologies. Under the FutureSkills Prime program, there are over 500+ courses & 2000+ digital fluency pathways offered on the platform. So far, more than **15.78 lakh candidates** have been enrolled in various courses comprising of approximately 41% women learners and 85% candidates from tier-2 and tier-3 cities.

Digital India also actively advocates and works with State Governments for development of technology & entrepreneurship in various Tier-2 & Tier-3 towns of India led by organizations like Software Technology Park of India (STPI) & National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT).

Further, National Informatics Centre (NIC), an attached office of Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), has its State Centres at State level and District level all over India. These State and District Centres continuously guide and assist various State & District level Government Offices in developing and implementing various ICT applications.

Common Service Centres have been established up to the Gram Panchayat level in all the States to provide information technology services.

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