GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3892
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 27.03.2026

MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN CYBERSECURITY, DIGITAL SKILLS AND INNOVATION IN MAHARASHTRA

3892. SHRI DHANANJAY BHIMRAO MAHADIK:

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

(a) the initiatives taken to strengthen cybersecurity, digital skills and innovation in Maharashtra over the last five years;
(b) the number of individuals who have been trained in emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), cybersecurity and cloud computing;
(c) the measures being taken to support research, Startups and innovation hubs in the electronics and IT sectors; and
(d) the manner in which the Ministry collaborates with Government of Maharashtra, educational institutions and industry to enhance cyber resilience, promote innovation ecosystems and create sustainable employment opportunities in the rapidly evolving digital economy of the State?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): India is known for its strong talent pipeline and skilled workforce, with its IT sector globally recognised for high-quality talent.

As per global assessments such as the Stanford AI Index, India ranks among leading nations in AI adoption, preparedness and ecosystem vibrancy.

India also accounts for around 20% of the global semiconductor design workforce, reflecting the strong emphasis placed on skilling and talent development.

The Government of India has been implementing several flagship initiatives in emerging areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Data Analytics, Cybersecurity, IoT and Cloud Computing to build a future-ready workforce and meet the growing demand for skilled professionals.

Significant initiatives to strengthen cybersecurity, digital skills and innovation include:

Information Security Education and Awareness (ISEA) Project
MeitY is implementing ISEA project for generating human resources in Information Security and creating general awareness on various aspects of cyber hygiene & cyber security among the

masses. It also provides training in cyber security for professionals including Chief Information Security Officers in 10 major IT domains.

More than 4.05 lakh candidates have been trained in various formal/non-formal courses, innovation and other activities in Information Security since 2014 onwards.

In the State of Maharashtra, 2,260 candidates are trained/under-going training in formal/non-formal courses, innovation and other activities in Information Security by three institutions namely, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, College of Engineering Pune Technological University and National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT) Aurangabad.

28,444 Government officials have been trained in various short-term programs in information security through direct/e-learning/Virtual Instructor Led Training (VILT) mode.

5,622 awareness workshops have been conducted across the country covering over 9.83 lakh participants, including school/college students, teachers, law enforcement, government personnel and general public.

This includes 192 awareness workshops organized in Maharashtra covering 28,201 participants.

The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (I-CERT)
CERT-In conducts cyber security training programs including emerging technologies in collaboration with Industry partners to upskill the cyber security workforce in Government, public and private organizations.

So far, 121 training programs were conducted covering 54,373 participants during the last five years including 6095 from Maharashtra.

FutureSkills PRIME Programme
FutureSkills PRIME Programme is offered by MeitY through a joint collaboration with National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) for Skilling, reskilling, and upskilling in emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Semiconductor, Big Data Analytics, IoTs, Cybersecurity, Blockchain, AR/VR, etc.

The industry aligned courses are offered through a portal at https://futureskillsprime.in/ accessible to earn anytime-anywhere skill certificates.

More than 30 lakh candidates have registered on the portal, out of which there have been 19 lakh+ candidates enrolled/trained in various courses. This includes more than 7.3 lakhs candidates in AI/Big Data Analytics, 2.43 lakhs in Cloud computing and 1.55 lakhs in Cybersecurity.

In the State of Maharashtra, a total of 1.86 lakh + candidates are enrolled/ trained. This includes more than 80,000 candidates in AI/Big Data Analytics, 25,000 in Cloud computing and 13,000 in Cybersecurity.

National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT)
NIELIT conducts human resource development and related activities in the field of Information, Electronics & Communications Technology (IECT). As a part of its capacity building and skill development initiative, it undertakes various programmes like IndiaAI, FutureSkills PRIME etc to provide training on Artificial Intelligence and other cutting-edge technologies

It has trained more than 70,000 candidates in the area of Artificial Intelligence and Data Science through different programmes and 35,302 candidates are enrolled/trained under the various Cyber Security programmes
NIELIT Aurangabad centre, with the support of 400 accredited Training partners, is conducting skilling courses in the area of AI, Cloud computing, web development, IoT ,Cybersecurity, PCB Designing, Drone technology across Maharashtra.

In the last 5 year, this centre has trained around 3000 participants in niche technologies.

NIELIT has also signed MoU with MSBTE (Maharashtra State Board of Technical Education), BARTI (Babasaheb Ambedkar Research and Training Institute), and AMRUT(Academy of Maharashtra, Research Upliftment and Training) Maharashtra.

As part of this, Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence is envisaged to be established in the field of Robotics, IoT, Industry 4.0, 3D printing and allied technologies for capacity training at various Government polytechnics and engineering colleges in the State of Maharashtra.

NIELIT Digital University
NIELIT Digital University (NDU) Platform delivers online and blended skill-based courses in emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, Cloud Computing, and other frontier domains areas.

A learner can access NSQF-aligned courses through this platform. So far more than 55,000 candidates have registered on the platform.

Digital Literacy
The Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) Scheme was initiated in 2017 to reach digital literacy in 6 crore rural households (one person per household) nationwide.

Under the scheme, 6.39 crore individuals were trained across the country out of which 53.23 Lakh were trained in Maharashtra. The Scheme concluded on 31.03.2024.

Electronics & ICT Academy
Government is also implementing the Electronics and ICT Academy scheme to train faculty/trainers in emerging technologies. Under the scheme, so far, 1,78,808 faculty members have been trained in emerging areas of Electronics & ICT, out of which 1,132 are trained in NIELIT Aurangabad.

IndiaAI Data & AI Labs

Under IndiaAI Mission, IndiaAI Data and AI Labs are being established across the country to strengthen AI skilling and capacity building. As part of this initiative, 27 labs at NIELIT centres have already been established and operationalised to deliver foundational and sector-specific AI training in data and AI.

So far, a total of 2902 candidates have been trained out of which 91 candidates are from Maharashtra.

In addition, 543 labs in ITIs/Polytechnics across all States and Union Territories are currently under implementation to offer both foundational and sector-specific AI courses aligned with India's diverse developmental needs.

Semiconductor talent pipeline
1. Under the Chips to Start-up (C2S) Programme, Electronic Design Automation (EDA) tools have been made available to 315 academic institutions. This has helped students to undertake chip design, research and training activities. So far, their usage has exceeded 2 lakh crore hours.
Over 68,000 students have already been trained as part of this against the target of 85,000.
2. A Skilled Manpower Advanced Research and Training (SMART) Lab has been setup in NIELIT Calicut with an aim to train 1 lakh engineers in the domains of VLSI, Embedded Systems and IoT.

More than 1 lakh candidates have already been trained.

3. India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) has also partnered with LAM Research for conducting a large-scale training programme in nano-fabrication and process-engineering skills.

These would further augment skilled workforce for ATMP and advanced packaging. The program aims to generate 60,000 trained manpower in next 10 years.

Innovation and Startup Ecosystem
The measures & major initiatives taken by MeitY to support research, technology-led startups and innovation ecosystem are as follows :

1. Design Linked Incentive Scheme
24 projects are being supported for the design of semiconductor chips & SoCs, with a total project value of Rs. 900 crore.

These projects cover chips relating to various critical sectors such as video surveillance, drone detection, energy metering, microprocessors, satellite communications, broadband and IoT SoCs.

In addition, the Government is also providing infrastructure support for chip design to eligible applicants, including access to EDA tools, IP cores, and fabrication facilities. Such infrastructure support is being provided to 103 fabless chip design companies.

2. Chip to Startup (C2S) Programme
The Government is providing infrastructure support for chip design to eligible applicants, including access to EDA tools, IP cores, and fabrication facilities.

These advanced designing tools are now available to students of 315 universities/institutes. So far, their usage has reached 200 lakh hours.

Using the EDA tools and IPs, 146 chips designs have been taped out by 49 institutions across India out of which SCL, Mohali has successfully fabricated and packaged 94 student-designed chips.

3. TIDE 2.0 (Technology Incubation and Development of Entrepreneurs) Scheme
TIDE 2.0 Scheme was initiated in 2019 to promote technology-based entrepreneurship through financial and technical support to incubators.

51 incubators across premier academic institutions and R&D organizations across India were supported to nurture around 2,000 tech startups. The scheme had a total outlay of Rs. 264.62 crore over a five-year period and concluded on 31st January 2026

Under TIDE 2.0 Scheme, following 3 incubation centres were supported as TIDE 2.0 centre in Maharashtra:

- Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SINE), IIT Bombay
- Sandip Technology Business Incubator (TBI), Sandip University, Nashik
- AIC-Pinnacle Entrepreneurship Forum, Pune

4. GENESIS (Gen-Next Support for Innovative Startups) Scheme
MeitY initiated the 'Gen-Next Support for Innovative Startups (GENESIS)' Scheme to strengthen the startup ecosystem in Tier-II and Tier-III cities across India.

The scheme envisages scaling up about 1,600 technology startups, to discover, nurture and grow technology startups. The Scheme is being implemented through 65 incubation centres as Implementing Agencies including following 3 centres from Maharashtra:

- AIC-ADT Baramati Foundation, Baramati
- IIMN Foundation for Entrepreneurship Development (InFED), Nagpur
- Marathwada Accelerator for Growth and Incubation Council, Aurangabad

5. Software Technology Parks of India (STPI)
Government is implementing various schemes through Software Technology Parks of India to strengthen the electronic and ICT, startup, innovation ecosystem.

STPI has established six (6) centres in Maharashtra, located at Pune, Mumbai, Nagpur, Nashik, Kolhapur, and Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar.

Through these centers, STPI provides following services to startups:
- Approvals through 'Single window' system,
- High Speed Data Communication (HSDC) services,
- State-of-the-art incubation services,

- Cyber security services,
- Project management & consultancy services, and
- IT managed services/co-location services

Further, STPI has established Centers of Entrepreneurship (CoEs) for nurturing innovation and the tech startup ecosystem in the state of Maharashtra.

STPI has also trained around 480+ individuals in emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence of Things (AIoT), Data Science and Data Analytics in last 2 years across the country.

In the State of Maharashtra, STPI's initiatives are as follows:

Statutory Services: STPI has been providing statutory services to software exporting units through a single-window clearance mechanism

During FY 2025-26 till date, the total IT/ITeS exports by 1295 STPI-registered units in Maharashtra is ₹ 1,92,705/- crore

Incubation Services: STPI provides incubation space to startups and IT/ITeS companies in the state of Maharashtra

It has developed a total of 11,390 sq. ft. of raw incubation space and 1,073 plug-and-play seats across its six centres in Maharashtra. Currently, 55 startups/units are under incubation with STPI in the state

6. Centres of Entrepreneurship (CoEs): STPI has established two CoEs in Maharashtra, namely MOTION at Pune and FASAL at Akola

MOTION is a CoE focused on Autonomous, Connected, Electric, and Shared (ACES) Mobility in Pune, set up in collaboration with the Government of Maharashtra and industry partners. It offers state-of-the-art incubation facilities along with domain-specific physical laboratories to support startups working in the ACES mobility sector.

FASAL is a CoE for IoT in Agriculture, established at Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth (PDKV), Akola, in collaboration with PDKV, Akola, Maharashtra and industry partners.

As of now, the MOTION CoE has supported 55 startups, while the FASAL CoE has supported 41 startups from Maharashtra.

Government of India is committed to collaborate with educational institutions and industry and State Government to enhance cyber resilience, promote innovation ecosystems and create sustainable employment opportunities in the rapidly evolving digital economy.

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