

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 362
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 27.11.2024

PRADHAN MANTRI GRAMIN DIGITAL SAKSHARTA ABHIYAN

362. SHRI VISHALDADA PRAKASHBAPU PATIL:

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

- (a) the total funds sanctioned, allocated and spent on Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) for financial years 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24;
- (b) the reasons for reduced and/or discontinued allocation to PMGDISHA despite the uptick in digitalisation due to several Central/ State schemes during pandemic;
- (c) the measures taken and standards fixed to ensure the quality of training under PMGDISHA;
- (d) whether any impact evaluations have been conducted on the said abhiyan, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) the details on a village-wise distribution of the number of PMGDISHA centres currently operational all over the country;
- (f) the details of classes held since the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and whether there are any protocols in place to resume the regular training at these centres; and
- (g) the details of the employment opportunities guaranteed to the certified beneficiaries of this abhiyan?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (g): The Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) was launched by MeitY Government of India to promote digital literacy in rural India. The aim was to reach 6 crore rural households (one person per household) nationwide.

The scheme continued during the COVID-19 pandemic in a graded fashion while adhering to the relaxation provided by the guidelines/directives issued by the respective Central/State/District Administration. The quality of training under PMGDISHA scheme were kept intact with the objectives across all training centres / CSC through the following measures:

- Training provided with standardized multimedia content in 22 Languages accessible in multimodal format for all candidates across all training centres / CSCs;
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in-line with the Covid-19 protocols were created and shared with all Training Centres for training and examination;
- Virtual sessions and workshops were conducted with the Training Centres to motivate them to re-start their activities;
- Refresher trainings were provided to registered/ trained candidates, who were unable to appear for training and/or certification;
- A Chatbot was created with basic information on PMGDISHA portal which was made available in both in Hindi and English languages;
- Training Centres were encouraged to join groups on popular social media platforms and share relevant training material through these groups;

- PMGDISHA content was uploaded on the DigiShala channel so that candidates could refer to these on their own and become ready for registration and assessment after minor training/revision.

The total funds utilised for the scheme during the financial years 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24 were Rs. 300.00 crore, Rs. 250.00 crore, and Rs. 165.92 crore, respectively.

The impact analysis of the PMGDISHA scheme was carried out by three agencies namely IIT Delhi, Council for Social Development (CSD) and Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA). The latest impact assessment study of the PMGDISHA scheme was conducted by IIPA. The gist of the evaluation report is that the PMGDISHA is a unique scheme due to its large scale and the use of remotely proctored examinations. The training provided under PMGDISHA has had a significant impact on the adoption of Information & Communication Technology (ICT) and other forms of digital media. It has benefited its participants by enabling their access to a wide range of information and services for various purposes, helping to reduce the overall digital divide in the country. The key findings of the report are as follows:

- 18% fund used in Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes (SCSP), 12% for Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) and 11% for North-Eastern Region (NER) have made sure the empowerment of weaker sections.
- Women participation is very large and their inclusion at the rural level will open up the path for the learning of the whole family.
- More than 55% of respondents cited a direct benefit to their livelihoods after PMGDISHA training.
- Almost 50% respondents stated that PMGDISHA helped them get a better Job.

Also, the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) conducted the 'Comprehensive Annual Modular Survey' (CAMS) in its 79th round (July, 2022 to June, 2023) and the data in their report indicated a significant positive trend in digital literacy across both rural and urban areas of India. As against 6 crore, 6.39 crore individuals were trained across the country as on March 31, 2024, the scheme has ended. From the above reports and given the significant rise in smartphone usage, internet penetration, and digital engagement in rural areas, the objectives of the scheme have been successfully achieved.
