DIGITAL SKILL INITIATIVE

1755. SHRI VISHNU DATT SHARMA:

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

(a) whether Digital India/BharatNet and MeitY digital-skilling initiatives are being implemented to expand digital access and employability;
(b) if so, whether BharatNet fibre, last-mile Wi-Fi and digital literacy programmes are operational in the districts of Katni, Panna and town of Khajuraho in the Khajuraho Lok Sabha constituency and the number of persons trained;
(c) if so, the details of measures enabling farmers, women and MSMEs to access digital payments, e-markets and online services;
(d) if digital inclusion remains low, the barriers identified and steps planned for the same; and
(e) the strategy to link MeitY skilling and entrepreneurship support with local job creation and micro-enterprise opportunities in the said districts?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e): Digital India programme was launched by Government of India in line with Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision to democratize technology and empower citizens. The 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.

BharatNet
Digital India has contributed to the rapid expansion of internet access through initiatives such as BharatNet. It aims to provide high-speed internet to rural and remote areas.

The internet penetration and usage across the country have grown substantially in last 10 years. As of October 2025, 2,14,843 Gram Panchayats (GPs) have been made service-ready under BharatNet, including 17,850 GPs of Madhya Pradesh.

Khajuraho town is not covered under BharatNet, as BharatNet connectivity is provided **only** to **Gram Panchayats/villages**.

The summary of BharatNet service-ready GPs in the districts of Katni and Panna is as under.

District	Number of Service-ready GPs

Katni	115
Panna	387

Expansion of digital skills and local employability

India's digital transformation includes connectivity as well as digital skilling, employability and entrepreneurship. Key initiatives include:

FutureSkills PRIME Programme
- National platform for advanced technology skilling with 15.5 lakh+ learners enrolled, including ~41% women
- Enables employability in emerging tech domains (AI, cloud, cybersecurity, etc.).

NIELIT Digital Literacy & Job-linked Training
- 9000+ NIELIT centres nationwide, including 14 centres in Katni and Panna
- More than 43 lakh candidates have been trained
- Established virtual labs in semiconductor design, cybersecurity, forensics, Industry 4.0, etc., and provides credit transfer under the Academic Bank of Credits

PMGDISHA (Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan)
- One of the world's largest digital literacy initiatives
- Targeted one person from every rural household for basic digital literacy
- Over 6.39 crore persons trained nationwide (against the target of 6 cr)

IndiaAI FutureSkills

The aim is to develop AI skilled professionals in India by increasing the number of graduates, post-graduate and PhDs in AI domain.
- Fellowship target of 500 PhD fellows, 5,000 postgraduates and 8,000 undergraduates.
- 27 IndiaAI Data and AI Labs established in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities, in collaboration with NIELIT
- Foundation-level courses provided on AI, data and related fields such as Data Annotation, Data Curation, Data Cleaning, Data Science, etc.
- 174 ITIs and Polytechnics across 27 States/UTs have been approved for setting up additional IndiaAI Data and AI Labs

Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI)

It provides broadband services through Public Wi-Fi networks across the country. The PM-WANI framework enables local entrepreneurs to set up public Wi-Fi hotspots with minimal license requirements.

District	PM-WANI Hotspots*
Katni	76
Panna	40

* (as on 03.12.2025)

Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)
It is a central sector scheme for generating employment opportunities primarily in rural areas. The prospective entrepreneurs are assisted in setting up new micro enterprises in the non-farm sector

Further, under the scheme Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) training is provided to beneficiaries through online and offline mode free of cost thus enabling digital inclusion and skilling.

Under Digital India Programme, there are several initiatives which enable farmers, women, youth and MSMEs to access digital payments, e-markets, and online services; details of which are placed at **Annexure-I.**

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<div align="right"><u>**Annexure-I**</u></div>

Major Initiatives under Digital India Programme enabling citizens to access digital payments, e-markets and online services:

- The **JAM Trinity** (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile) is a transformative initiative by the Government of India designed to foster financial inclusion, improve governance, and ensure efficient delivery of welfare benefits and public services
- **Unified Payments Interface (UPI):** UPI has revolutionized digital transactions across the country. UPI has empowered millions of individuals and small businesses in rural and remote areas to make fast, secure and low-cost digital payments, significantly advancing financial inclusion.
  UPI is now live in over seven countries, including the UAE, Singapore, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, France, Mauritius, making India a global trailblazer in digital payments.
  · UPI serves more than 49 crore individuals, 6.5 crore merchants, and connects 683 banks on one platform, making it the world's largest digital payment system.
  · UPI powers 85% of India's digital payments and nearly 50% of global real-time digital payments.
- **Aadhaar:** Aadhaar is the world's largest digital identity programme that provides biometric and demographic-based unique digital identity. As of September, 2025,143+ crore Aadhaar IDs have been generated against 126+ crore in April 2022.
  The number of authentication transactions has risen from 2,291.97 crore in FY 2022–23 to 2,707 crore in FY 2024–25, with 1,768 crore transactions a in FY 2025–26 (for the period April to November 2025).
- **DigiLocker:**DigiLocker has provided anytime access to authentic digital documents from original issuer for the common citizen. More than 61.29 crore users are registered with DigiLocker to avail its services and more than 835+ crore documents issued from 2261 issuers onboarded on the platform.
  This number has grown from approximately 507 crore issued documents and 10.65 crore users in April 2022.
- **Government e-Marketplace (GeM):** GeM enables online procurement of common use Goods & Services required by various Government Departments / Organisations / PSUs. It has over 1.67 lakh government buyers and 23 lakh+ sellers and service providers.
- **Common Services Centres –** Common Services Centres (CSCs) have been set up as an entrepreneurship-based and self-sustainable model, implemented by CSC e-Governance Services India Limited.

The CSC 2.0 project aims to deliver e-services to rural citizens and expand the CSC network to the Gram Panchayat level, offering more than 800 services including Government, financial, Aadhaar, education, telemedicine, travel and utility services.

The project is implemented pan-India, including the State of Madhya Pradesh. As on September 2025, 5.69 lakh CSCs are functional nationwide, of which 4.43 lakh are at the Gram Panchayat level.

- **Direct Benefits Transfer (DBT):** DBT uses Aadhaar to deliver welfare payments directly and remove fake beneficiaries.

  By October 2025, ₹ 47+ lakh crore has been transferred through DBT. Majority of the disbursement of Governments' welfare schemes is being carried out through DBT.

- **National Scholarship Portal (NSP):**The platform enables scheme owning Ministries/Departments and States/UTs to process applications and disburse Scholarships/funds directly into the beneficiary's bank account through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode.

  So far, 153 schemes belonging to 13 Ministries/Departments and 21 States/UTs are onboarded on NSP.

- **e-Transport:** e-Transport Mission Mode Project is transforming India's transport sector through a centralized, nationwide digital platform with key applications such as VAHAN, Sarathi, and e-Challan.

- **e-Sanjeevani** –e-Sanjeevani facilitates quick and easy access to doctors and medical specialists directly from your smartphone. The platform has served more than 43.22 crore patients across 1,36,525 Health & Wellness Centres functioning as spokes, supported by over 2,30,089 doctors, specialists, super-specialists, and health workers delivering telemedicine services.

- **MyGov:** MyGov is a Government of India's Citizen Engagement Platform which collaborates with multiple Government bodies/ Ministries to engage people in policy formulation and seeks the opinion of people on issues/ topics of public interest and welfare.

  Presently, over 6.02+ crore citizens are registered with MyGov, participating in various activities hosted on MyGov platform against 2.33+ crore users in April 2022.

- **Jeevan Pramaan:** Jeevan Pramaan is an Aadhaar biometric-enabled digital service that allows Central, State, and other Government pensioners to conveniently submit Digital Life Certificates (DLCs) from anywhere in India, including their homes, using Aadhaar-based authentication.

  Over 11.69 crore Digital Life certificates have been processed since 2014.

- The annual e-transactions reported at **eTAAL**(electronic transaction aggregation and analysis layer) have increased from 264 crore in FY 2013-14 to 34,972 crore in FY 2024-25, showcasing India's rapid digital transformation.

- **Promotion of Electronics & IT Hardware manufacturing:** Key projects under this sub-scheme include Semicon India Programme, Production linked incentives (PLI) for large scale electronics manufacturing, Production linked incentives (PLI) for IT hardware, Electronic Component Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS), Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC and EMC 2.0) Scheme and Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors (SPECS).

- As a result of these policy efforts, electronics manufacturing has grown manifold from Rs 1.9 lakh crore in 2014-15 to Rs 11.3 lakh crore in 2024-25 at a CAGR of 19.5% and our electronics exports have grown from Rs 38,000 crore in 2014-15 to Rs 3.26 lakh crore in 2024-25 at a CAGR of around 24%.

- **National Knowledge Network (NKN):** NKN carries the digital-traffic of National/state Data Centers (NDCs/SDCs), State-Wide Area Networks (SWANs) and provides connectivity to various

Digital India initiatives, and carry digital-traffic of various G2G (Government to Government) and G2C (Government to Citizen) services, District Connectivity, etc.

NKN also inter-connects all knowledge institutions across the country through high-speed data communication network to encourage sharing of resources and collaborative research.

Currently, 1,822 links to Institutions have been commissioned and made operational under NKN and 681 NKN links have been connected to NIC District Centres across India. This facilitates the Digital Governance data-traffic to ride over NKN.

- **Promotion of IT & ITeS Industries:** Government launched India BPO Promotion Scheme (IBPS) and North East BPO Promotion Schemes under Digital India Program with the aim to create employment opportunities and dispersal of IT/ITeS industry in small cities/ towns. The scheme has been concluded.

- Under **SAMRIDH (Startup Accelerators of MeitY for Product Innovation, Development and Growth)** Programme, (over the last three years) 42 accelerators have been engaged across India. Since inception, the programme has accelerated 373 startups and provided financial support to 201 startups.

- **Unified Mobile App for New-Age Governance (UMANG) app**: UMANG provides a single platform for all Indian Citizens to access pan-India e-Gov services ranging from Central to Local Government bodies and other citizen centric services.

UMANG now provides access to 2,363 services offered by 240 Central and State Government departments, serving a growing user base of 9.60 crore registered citizens.

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