GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3008
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 11.03.2026

DIGITAL INDIA PROGRAMME IN TIRUNELVELI

3008. SHRI ROBERT BRUCE C:

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

(a) whether the Government has implemented the BharatNet project in Tirunelveli district to provide broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats and beyond on demand and if so, the details thereof;
(b) the status of the Digital India programme in Tirunelveli particularly in terms of e-governance services, digital literacy and citizen engagement;
(c) the progress of the Digital Village initiative in Tirunelveli, focusing on the availability of services such as tele-medicine, tele-education, LED lighting, Wi-Fi hotspots and skill development at the Gram Panchayat level;
(d) the challenges faced in establishing digital infrastructure in hilly and remote areas of Tirunelveli and the steps being taken by the Government to address them; and
(e) whether there are any plans to enhance digital connectivity and infrastructure in Tirunelveli to bridge the digital divide and if so, the details thereof?

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.

BharatNet
It is implemented by Department of Telecommunications in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs) and villages in the country, including those in Tamil Nadu.

The project aims to enable affordable and high-speed internet access in rural areas and facilitate delivery of digital services. So far, a total of 2,14,921 Gram Panchayats have been made service-ready under the BharatNet project in the country, including 113 GPs in Tirunelveli district.

Over the last decade, digital connectivity in Tamil Nadu has improved significantly. This has been possible because of expansion of telecom infrastructure, increasing mobile broadband penetration and Government initiatives such as Digital India, BharatNet and Common Service Centres (CSCs).

The growth in internet subscribers, broadband connectivity and digital public infrastructure has enabled wider access to digital services, digital payments and e-governance across the State, including rural areas. Status of digital connectivity in Tamil Nadu is as follows:

S. No.	Indicator	2026 (Approx.)
1	Total Wireless (Mobile) Subscribers	~7.95 crore
2	Internet Subscribers	~6.20 crore
3	Gram Panchayats connected under BharatNet	~10,869+ service-ready GPs
4	Villages with Mobile Connectivity	16,485 villages
5	Common Service Centres (CSCs)	19,641 CSCs are functional in Tamil Nadu (in rural and urban areas), out of which 13,001 CSCs are functional at the Gram Panchayat level (rural)

Under the Digital India Programme, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has taken several initiatives to enable online delivery of citizen-centric services.

These include development and implementation of digital platforms, promotion of Aadhaar-based authentication for beneficiary identification, and expansion of service delivery through Common Service Centres (CSCs) to provide assisted access to citizens, particularly in rural and remote areas.

Digital India initiatives are accessible through mobile platforms, which has played a significant role in bridging the urban–rural divide. These initiatives enable citizens to access a wide range of government services such as digital education, digital health, digital payments, e-Courts etc. anytime and from anywhere.

Further, various e-Governance services are being delivered through State Government portals and mobile applications. The status of key initiatives in the areas of e-Governance services, digital literacy, and citizen engagement aimed at ensuring inclusive and equitable access to Government services while enhancing the efficiency and quality of service delivery, is as under:

(i) Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG), one mobile application for all government services, is operational and offers **2446+ services** (Central: 872, State:1,574) for individuals.

422 services from the state of Tamil Nadu are onboarded on UMANG platform.

(ii) DigiLocker: DigiLocker has provided anytime access to authentic digital documents from original issuer for the common citizen. More than **67.56+ crore** users are registered with DigiLocker to avail its services and more than 950+ crore documents issued from 2462 issuers onboarded on the platform.

More than **1.94 crore** Aadhaar enabled registrations have taken place in the State of Tamil Nadu to avail DigiLocker services.

(iii) Aadhaar: Aadhaar is the world's largest digital identity programme that provides biometric and demographic-based unique digital identity. **143.80+ crore Aadhaar IDs** have been generated so far with 8.47 Crore Aadhaar IDs generated in the state of Tamil Nadu.

More than 200+ Public welfare and good governance initiatives in Tamil Nadu utilise Aadhaar authentication for beneficiary identification across sectors such as healthcare, education, agriculture and banking.

(iv) Common Services Centre: CSCs offer government and business services in digital mode thereby enhancing last-mile connectivity in rural areas through Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs). Over 800 services are being delivered through CSCs.

As on January, 2026, 5.54 lakh CSCs are functional across the country (in rural and urban areas), out of which 4.32 lakh CSCs are functional at the Gram Panchayat level (rural). A total number of 444 CSCs are functional in Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu. State/UT wise and district wise details of CSCs are available at https://csc.gov.in/ and list of services is available at https://csc.gov.in/.

(v) MyGov: MyGov is a Government of India's Citizen Engagement Platform which collaborates with multiple Government bodies/ Ministries. It engages with people in policy formulation and seeks the opinion of people on issues/ topics of public interest and welfare.

Presently, over **6.11+ crore** citizens are registered with MyGov, participating in various activities hosted on MyGov platform.

The MyGov State instance (https://tamilnadu.mygov.in/) has also been operationalized in Tamil Nadu to promote participatory governance at the State level, enabling citizens to actively engage with the Government by sharing their ideas, suggestions, and feedback directly with State government.

Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) is promoting skilling/upskilling and capacity building through the following initiatives aimed at developing industry-ready manpower in emerging and advanced technology domains across the country including Tamil Nadu:

(i) PMGDISHA: Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) was launched in 2017 to ensure digital literacy. The scheme was implemented through CSC e-Governance services India limited and The scheme concluded on 31st March 2024.

The Scheme emerged as one of the world's largest digital literacy initiatives with over 6.39 Crore persons getting trained nationwide (against the target of 6 Crore).

14,07,880 individuals were trained in the state of Tamil Nadu, including 38,889 candidates from Tirunelveli district.

(ii) FutureSkills Prime: FutureSkills PRIME program is a collaborative initiative of MeitY and National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) aimed at making India a cutting-edge digital talent nation.

Skilling, reskilling, and upskilling course are provided in emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Big Data Analytics, IoTs, Cyber Security, Blockchain, AR/VR, etc.

Courses are developed in the consultation with industry to align with actual employment needs. The Portal can be accessed online at https://futureskillsprime.in/ to earn skill certificates in line with their aptitude and aspirations.

Under the programme, so far, more than 27.53+ lakh candidates have registered on the portal, out of which there have been 17.24+ lakh candidates enrolled/trained in various courses. This includes approximately 4 Lakh candidates from the state of Tamil Nadu.

(iii) National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT):

NIELIT provides digital literacy courses such as Awareness in Computer Concept (ACC), Course on Computer Concepts (CCC) etc.

It has trained 43 lakh+ candidates under various courses, including digital literacy and cyber security awareness. Training is delivered through a wide network of 56 NIELIT Centres and 9000+ Accredited Training Partners/Facilitation Centres.

NIELIT is providing digital skilling to the youth of Tamil Nadu through its own Centre located in Chennai. It has more than 45 Facilitation Centres for providing training on Digital Literacy courses in the state, out of which 01 Facilitation Centres is located in Tirunelveli.

More than 1400 candidates have been trained in various digital skilling courses in the current financial year under NIELIT Chennai

Digital Village Pilot Project

This project was launched to provide education, health, skill development, solar street lighting, financial inclusion, and digital government-to-citizen and business-to-citizen services in 700 villages (one from each district across States and Union Territories). The project successfully concluded on 31st March, 2024.

In the state of Tamil Nadu, 32 villages were covered under this scheme including Tirunelveli district.

The services provided under the said project are as follows:
- Education Services: Courses provided under this project- Basic Computer Course (BCC),
- Course on Computer Concept (CCC), Tally- Kaushal Praman Patra, Basic Course in Information Technology (BCIT).
- Additional Education: Competitive exam training, fundamental of CAD (Computer Aided Design)
- Health Services: Tele-health and Tele-Veterinary consultation
- Financial inclusion awareness programme
- Solar street lights
- Skill development in Automotive technician, Handset repair, Field technician – Home appliance, and Electrical technician

Digital Connectivity and infrastructure:

Digital India, through initiatives such as BharatNet, has enabled rapid expansion of high-speed internet connectivity across the country including rural and remote areas. This has led to a significant increase in internet penetration across the country.

Further, Amended BharatNet Program (ABP) has also been approved by the Government on 04.08.2023 for up-gradation of existing network of BharatNet Phase-I and Phase-II, creation of network in balance GPs and connectivity to remaining non-GP villages on demand basis from their respective GPs.

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