

DIGITAL JOURNEY HAS FOCUSED ON EMPOWERMENT, INCLUSION AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND ITS POSITIVE IMPACT IS BEING FELT IN ALL ASPECTS OF THE LIVES OF INDIAN CITIZENS: RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD

Relevant for: Indian Economy | Topic: Issues Related to Poverty, Inclusion, Employment & Sustainable Development

Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, the Union Minister for Electronics & IT, Communications and Law & Justice, has said that the digital journey has focused on empowerment, inclusion and digital transformation and its positive impact is being felt in all aspects of the lives of Indian citizens. While addressing a video conference marking celebration of 5 years journey of India's Digital India Programme here, today, he stated that in the current pandemic scenario, thanks to JAM trinity (Jan Dhan, Aadhaar an Mobile), people are able to work from home, people are able make digital payment, students are able to learn through TV, Mobile and Laptop, patients are able to take tele-consultation, and farmers in remote corner of India is able to get PM-KISAN benefits directly in their bank accounts.

The conference was organised by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to celebrate 5 Years of Digital India progressing towards Digital Bharat - AatmaNirbhar Bharat. This conference was graced by the presence of MoIT, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, Minister of State for Electronics & Information Technology, Shri Sanjay Dhotre, Additional Chief Secretaries of some States, Shri Nandan Nilekani, the IT Secretaries of all States, representatives from Ministries, Industry and the academia. The conference was attended by 1,500 delegates all over the world.

The Digital India journey in the past 5 years has centred around empowerment, inclusion, digital transformation. It has positively impacted all aspects of the lives of Indian citizens identity management through Aadhaar, Direct Benefit Transfer, Common Services Centres, DigiLocker, mobile based UMANG services, participatory governance through MyGov, Jeevan Pramaan, to UPI, Ayushman Bharat, e-Hospital, PM-Kisan, e-NAM, Soil Health Cards, SWAYAM, SWAYAM PRABHA, National Scholarship Portal, e-Pathshala, and so on. A 'National AI Portal' and 'Responsible AI for Youth' was launched recently to lay the foundation for an AI-powered future. Digital India's initiatives have also played a pivotal role during the CoVID-19 situation, such as Aarogya Setu, E-Sanjeevani, sensitisation through MyGov and Social media platforms etc.

Pointing out that the number of e-Services has increased from 2,463 in 2014 to 3,858 till May 2020 and daily average electronic transactions have increased from 66 lakh in 2014 to 16.3 crore in 2020, the Union Minister shared that Aadhaar has been issued to 125.7 crore residents and 4,216 crore authentications have been facilitated. "Direct Benefit Transfer to the tune of Rs 11.1 lakh crore has been disbursed for 426 schemes from 56 Ministries and has led to the

saving of Rs 1.7 lakh crore due. Jan Dhan Accounts have reached 38.73 crore beneficiaries, with a total of Rs 1.33 lakh crore in beneficiaries bank accounts. Mobile and internet connections are being used by 117 crore and 68.8 crore users, respectively. DigiLocker, launched on July 1, 2015, has 378 crore issued documents. Unified Mobile App for New-Age Governance (UMANG) has 860+ services operational and more than 3 Crore downloads have taken place, he further added. MyGov has been launched to facilitate participatory governance in the country, with a total of 1.17 Crore registered participants, while facilitating the Mann Ki Baat of the Prime Minister.

Emphasizing the Digital India's initiatives during the COVID-19 situation, such as Aarogya Setu for its ground-breaking development time of 3 weeks and localisation in 12 Indian languages with 13 crore downloads, with additional 3 crores for Kai OS, he informed that it has helped identify over 350 COVID-19 hotspots. He further said that sensitization through MyGov and Social Media Platforms have played a crucial role in tackling the pandemic through user friendly graphics, video, quotes to citizens through the MyGov website and through all social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Telegram, and Youtube. He also spoke briefly about other initiatives such as E-Sanjeevani, SAMHAR-COVID-19, Ayush Sanjivani Mobile app, and VC and e-Office.

While concluding, he reiterated that Digital India's achievements can be attributed to the united efforts of Central Government, State Governments, Industries and Academia, all key parts of Team India. Lastly, he stated that India's talent pool of skilled people, technology prowess and geo-political advantages are poised to make India an inspiring country in the 21st Century for the welfare of Indians and the world.

During the event a panel discussion was held regarding public digital platforms. Shri Ajay Sawhney, Secretary, MeitY spoke about 'Building Digital Government Platforms for the Digital Economy of the Future'. Shri Nandan Nilekani, Non-Executive Chairman, Infosys, spoke about the relevance and success of public-private partnership models in e-Government Development, where he touched four dimensions-Government as an enabler of technology, as a customer of Technology, as a platform provider and the Government as collaborator to provide solutions. He congratulated Hon'ble Minister on the successful implementation of Digital India in the country. The building of Aatma Nirbhar Digital Systems also deliberated extensively. 'AatmaNirbharta' or 'Self-Reliance' implies development of in-house capacity and capability to drive economic and social development of the country.

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