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Digital India -Programme: 11 Years of Digital Transformation, Digital Public Infrastructure and Inclusive Governance

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Recent Developments:

- The **Digital India Programme** completed **11 years** on **1 July 2026**, marking more than a decade of digital transformation across governance, public service delivery and the economy.
- Over the past decade, **Digital India** has evolved into the foundation of India's **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)**, accelerating innovation, startup growth, financial inclusion and digital governance.
- India has emerged as the global leader in **real-time digital payments**, with the **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** accounting for nearly **49%** of global real-time payment transactions.
- The digital economy currently contributes nearly **12–14%** of India's **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** and is projected to contribute nearly **20%** over the coming decade.
- During India's **G20 Presidency (2023)**, India launched **India Stack Global** and the **Global DPI Repository**, promoting global adoption of Indian digital public infrastructure solutions.
- As of **February 2026**, India has signed **Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)** with **24 countries** for cooperation in **India Stack**, digital identity, digital payments and public service delivery.

Digital India Programme:

Overview:

- The **Digital India Programme**, launched on **1 July 2015**, aims to transform India into a **digitally empowered society** and a **knowledge-based economy**.
- The programme seeks to provide **digital infrastructure as a core utility**, deliver governance and services on demand and digitally empower every citizen.
- It promotes **paperless, faceless and cashless governance**, while improving transparency, accountability and ease of living.
- Digital India forms the backbone of India's **Digital Public Infrastructure**, enabling interoperable digital platforms across governance, finance, health, education and commerce.

Nine Pillars of Digital India:

Core Components:

- **Broadband Highways** aim to provide reliable broadband infrastructure across rural and urban India, strengthening digital governance and inclusive economic growth.
- As of **March 2026**, broadband subscribers exceeded **106.58 crore**, reflecting rapid expansion of digital connectivity.
- **Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity** seeks to ensure mobile network coverage in all villages, particularly remote and underserved regions.

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- Nearly **2.15 lakh Gram Panchayats**, approximately **97%**, have been connected through nearly **7 lakh km** of optical fibre under **BharatNet Phase-I** and **BharatNet Phase-II**.
- **Public Internet Access Programme** expands citizen access to digital services through more than **6.5 lakh Common Service Centres** and **1.6 lakh post offices**.
- **e-Governance**, through process re-engineering and digital integration, simplifies service delivery using platforms such as **DigiLocker** and the **National Single Sign-On** ecosystem.
- **e-Kranti** accelerates digital service delivery through integrated platforms including **e-Hospital**, **e-Sanjeevani** and **e-Courts**.
- **Information for All** promotes transparency, open governance and citizen participation through platforms such as **MyGov** and the **Open Government Data Platform**.
- **Electronics Manufacturing** has expanded significantly, with production increasing from **₹1.9 lakh crore** in **2014–15** to nearly **₹12 lakh crore** by **March 2026**.
- India has become the **world's second-largest mobile phone manufacturer**, strengthening its position in global electronics value chains.
- **Information Technology for Jobs** supports digital employment through the rapidly expanding **Information Technology** and **Information Technology Enabled Services** sector, which generated nearly **USD 283 billion** in revenue during **FY25**.
- India hosts more than **2,100 Global Capability Centres**, employing nearly **26 lakh professionals** across engineering, artificial intelligence, cyber security and analytics.
- **Early Harvest Programmes**, including biometric attendance, secure government email, public Wi-Fi, electronic books and SMS-based weather alerts, demonstrated the immediate benefits of digital governance.

Major Flagship Initiatives under Digital India:

Digital Public Infrastructure Ecosystem:

- **Jan Dhan–Aadhaar–Mobile (JAM) Trinity** has transformed financial inclusion through direct benefit transfer, digital identity and banking access.
- **DigiLocker** has created a secure digital document repository with over **70.69 crore** registered users and more than **850 crore** digitally issued documents as of **March 2026**.
- Completing **10 years** in **2026**, the **Unified Payments Interface** has revolutionised secure, instant and interoperable digital payments, while expanding to **9 countries**, including **Cambodia**.
- **India Stack** provides interoperable digital building blocks including digital identity, electronic know-your-customer, digital signatures, payments and consent-based data sharing.
- The **Account Aggregator Framework** enables secure, consent-based financial data sharing while strengthening digital financial inclusion and innovation.

Digital Transformation Across Sectors:

Governance, Health, Education and Commerce:

- **Online Registration System**, **e-Hospital**, **eBloodBank**, **e-Sanjeevani** and **Tele MANAS** have strengthened digital healthcare by improving access, efficiency and telemedicine services.
- **Government e-Marketplace (GeM)** has made public procurement transparent, competitive and paperless.
- **Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)** promotes an interoperable digital commerce ecosystem by reducing platform dependency and encouraging market competition.
- Under the **Digital Agriculture Mission**, **AgriStack** supports digital agriculture through farmer databases, **National Agriculture Market**, **Kisan e-Mitra** and other digital advisory services.
- **Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA)**, **Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM)** and **SWAYAM Prabha** are expanding access to quality education through digital learning resources.
- **Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA)** has strengthened rural digital literacy and digital inclusion.

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- **FutureSkills Prime, Skill India Digital Hub** and the **IndiaAI Mission** are preparing India's workforce for emerging technologies including artificial intelligence, cloud computing, cyber security and data analytics.

Significance of Digital India:

Major Achievements:

- Digital India has significantly improved transparency, accountability and efficiency in public administration.
- Digital Public Infrastructure has reduced transaction costs while improving financial inclusion and welfare delivery.
- Expansion of digital payments has accelerated India's transition towards a less-cash economy.
- Digital platforms have improved access to healthcare, education, agriculture, justice and government services.
- The programme has strengthened India's global leadership in **Digital Public Infrastructure** and digital innovation.
- According to the **International Monetary Fund**, India's Digital Public Infrastructure has become an important model for inclusive digital development and public service delivery across developing economies.

Challenges:

Key Issues:

- Digital infrastructure gaps continue to persist in remote, tribal, hilly and **Left Wing Extremism**-affected regions.
- Digital literacy remains uneven among women, senior citizens and economically weaker sections.
- Cyber security threats, digital fraud and personal data protection remain major governance challenges.
- Limited domestic semiconductor manufacturing and dependence on imported electronic components affect technological self-reliance.
- Bridging regional disparities in digital access remains essential for inclusive growth.

Way Forward:

Priority Measures:

- Complete universal broadband connectivity through accelerated implementation of **BharatNet** across all rural and remote areas.
- Strengthen digital literacy programmes to ensure inclusive participation of women, senior citizens, persons with disabilities and vulnerable communities.
- Expand domestic electronics manufacturing through the **India Semiconductor Mission**, research and development and deeper integration into global value chains.
- Strengthen cyber security architecture, digital trust and secure digital governance through robust implementation of the **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023**.
- Promote responsible adoption of **Artificial Intelligence**, cloud computing, digital public infrastructure and open digital ecosystems for sustainable economic growth.
- Expand India's Digital Public Infrastructure partnerships under **India Stack Global** to strengthen South-South cooperation and digital diplomacy.

Conclusion:

Towards a Digitally Empowered India:

- Over the last **11 years**, the Digital India Programme has transformed governance, financial inclusion, public service delivery and innovation through a robust digital ecosystem.

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Sustained investments in digital infrastructure, cyber security, semiconductor manufacturing, digital literacy and emerging technologies will be essential to realise the vision of a resilient, inclusive and globally competitive digital economy.

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