

Topic: Securing a Future for 'DIGITAL INDIA'

Narendra Modi began this chapter of Digital India on 1st July 2015. The Digital India initiative seeks to lay emphasis on e-governance and transform India into a digitally empowered society. The program is projected **at Rs 1, 13,000 crore** which will prepare the country for knowledge-based transformation. The Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DEITY) anticipates that this program will have a huge impact on the Ministry of Communication and IT. It is to ensure that government services are available to citizens electronically. It will focus on providing **high speed internet services to its citizens** and make services available in real time for both online and mobile platform. Digital India also aims to transform ease of doing business in the country. Modi's government is focusing on providing broadband services in all villages of the country, tele-medicine and mobile healthcare services and making the governance more participative. The Digital India initiative has attracted **Rs 4.5 lakh crore** worth of investment and will provide employment to **18 lakh people**.

Vision of Digital India initiative:

- 1. Infrastructure:** The Digital India initiative has a vision to provide high speed internet services to its citizens in all **gram panchayats**. Bank accounts will be given priority at individual level. People will be provided with safe and secure cyber space in the country.
- 2. Governance and services:** Government services will be available online where citizens will be ensured easy access to it. Transactions will be made easy through electronic medium.
- 3. Digital empowerment of citizens:** This is one of the most important factors of the Digital India initiative to provide universal digital literacy and make digital sources easily accessible. The services are also provided in Indian languages for active participation.

9 Major Projects under the initiative:

- 1. Manufacturing of electronics:** The government is focusing on **zero imports** of electronics. In order to achieve this, the government aims to put up smart energy meters, micro ATMs, mobile, consumer and medical electronics.
- 2. Provide public access to internet:** The government aims to provide internet services to **2.5 lakh villages** which comprises of one in every panchayat by **March 2017** and **1.5 lakh** post offices in the **next two years**. These post offices will become Multi-Service centres for the people.
- 3. Highways to have broadband services:** Government aims to lay national **optical fiber network** in all **2.5 lakh** gram panchayats. Broadband for the rural will be laid by December 2016 and broadband for all urban will mandate communication infrastructure in new urban development and buildings. By March 2017, the government aims to provide nationwide information infrastructure.
- 4. Easy access to mobile connectivity:** The government is taking steps to ensure that **by 2018** all villages are covered through mobile connectivity. The aim is to increase network penetration and cover gaps in all **44,000 villages**.



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5. e-Governance: The government aims to improve processes and delivery of services through e-Governance with **UIDAI**, payment gateway, EDI and mobile platforms. School certificates, voter ID cards will be provided online. This aims for a faster examination of data.

6. IT Training for Jobs: The government aims to train around **1 crore** students from small towns and villages for IT sector by **2020**. Setting up of BPO sectors in North eastern states is also part of the agenda.

7. e-Kranti: This service aims to deliver electronic services to people which deals with health, education, farmers, justice, security and financial inclusion.

8. Global Information: Hosting data online and engaging social media platforms for governance is the aim of the government. Information is also easily available for the citizens. **Mygov.nic.in** is a website launched by the government for a **2-way communication** between citizens and the government. People can send in their suggestions and comment on various issues raised by the government, like net neutrality.

9. Early harvest programs: Government plans to set up **Wi-Fi facilities in all universities** across the country. Email will be made the primary mode of communication. Aadhaar Enabled Biometric Attendance System will be deployed in all central government offices where recording of attendance will be made online.

Some Important Points:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the tech capital of the world - **Silicon Valley** - to further his dream of 'Digital India.
- Global investors like **Sundar Pichai, Satya Nadella, and Elon Musk** have supported Modi's Digital India initiative.
- Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi changed their **Facebook profile picture** in support of Digital India.
- The **four** brand ambassadors according to a release by the Department of Telecom are **Satvat Jagwani, Krati Tiwari, Ankit Fadia and Pranav Mistry**.
- Modi's arrival marks the first time an Indian head of state has been in **California in 33 years**.
- The Prime Minister also announced a plan to expand **Wi-Fi coverage across 500 railway stations** in India, in collaboration with Google.
- A **\$150-million** fund from **Qualcomm** to foster start-ups and cloud services by Microsoft, and a suggestion to **Apple on manufacturing in India** was also made during his visit.

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<http://indianexpress.com/article/technology/tech-news-technology/pm-modi-silicon-valley-google-microsoft-ceo-dinner/#sthash.oEkM3O2H.dpuf>

<http://www.ibnlive.com/news/tech/live-prime-minister-narendra-modi-at-silicon-valley-1115264.html>

<http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/in-silicon-valley-pm-modi-meets-satya-nadella-sundar-pichai-1223382>