

Digital India - High-Speed Internet Networks to Rural Areas [UPSC Notes GS-III]

The Indian Government launched the Digital India campaign to make available government services to citizens electronically by online infrastructure improvement and also by enhancing internet connectivity. It also aims to empower the country digitally in the domain of technology. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the campaign on 1st July 2015.

To know more about the Digital India Campaign, refer to the table below:

Digital India	
Date of launching	1st July 2015
Government Ministry	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Finance Ministry
Launched by	PM Narendra Modi
Official website	https://digitalindia.gov.in/

Digital India is an important campaign started by the Government of India and is equally important for the **IAS Exam**. Candidates can also download Digital India notes PDF at the end of this article.

What is Digital India?

Digital India was an initiative taken by the Government of India for providing high-speed internet networks to rural areas. Digital India Mission was launched by PM Narendra Modi on 1st July 2015 as a beneficiary to other government schemes including Make in India, Bharatmala, Sagarmala, Startup India, BharatNet, and Standup India.



Digital India Mission is mainly focused on three areas:

1. Providing digital infrastructure as a source of utility to every citizen.
2. Governance and services on demand.
3. To look after the digital empowerment of every citizen.

Digital India was established with a vision of inclusive growth in areas of electronic services, products, manufacturing, and job opportunities.

There are major nine pillars of Digital India that are mentioned in the table below:

Broadband Highways	Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity	Public Internet Access Programme
e-Governance	e-Kranti	Information for All
Electronics Manufacturing	IT for Jobs	Early Harvest Programmes

To know about other [government schemes](#), candidates can refer to the linked article.

Objectives of Digital India

The motto of the Digital India Mission is 'Power to Empower'. There are three core components to the Digital India initiative. They are digital infrastructure creation, digital delivery of services, and digital literacy.

The major objectives of this initiative are listed below:

1. To provide high-speed internet in all gram panchayats.
2. To provide easy access to Common Service Centre (CSC) in all the locality.
3. Digital India is an initiative that combines a large number of ideas and thoughts into a single, comprehensive vision so that each of them is seen as part of a larger goal.
4. The Digital India Programme also focuses on restructuring many existing schemes that can be implemented in a synchronized manner.

Advantages of Digital India Mission

Digital India Mission is an initiative that encompasses plans to connect the rural areas of the country with high-speed internet networks. On the platform of digital adoption, India ranks amongst the top 2 countries globally and the digital economy of India is likely to cross \$1 trillion by the year 2022.

Some of the advantages of Digital India are:

1. There is an increase in electronic transactions related to e-governance.
2. An optical fiber network of 2, 74,246 km has connected over 1.15 lakh Gram Panchayats under the Bharat Net programme.
3. A Common Service Center (CSC) is created under the National e-Governance Project of the Indian government which provides access for information and communication technology (ICT). Through computer and Internet access, the CSCs provide multimedia content related to e-governance, education, health, telemedicine, entertainment, and other government and private services.
4. Establishment of digital villages along with well-equipped facilities such as solar lighting, LED assembly unit, sanitary napkin production unit, and Wi-Fi choupal.

5. Internet data is used as a major tool for the delivery of the services and the urban internet penetration has reached 64%.

Challenges of Digital India

The government of India has taken an initiative through the Digital India Mission to connect the rural areas of the country with high-speed internet networks. Apart from the various initiatives taken by Digital India, there are several challenges faced by it.

Some of the challenges and drawbacks of Digital Mission are mentioned below:

1. The daily internet speed, as well as the Wi-Fi hotspots, are slow as compared to other developed nations.
2. Most of the small and medium scale industry has to struggle a lot for adapting to the new modern technology.
3. Limited capability of entry-level smartphones for smooth internet access.
4. Lack of skilled manpower in the field of digital technology.
5. To look for about one million cybersecurity experts to check and monitor the growing menace of digital crime.
6. Lack of user education.

Digital India Initiatives

The Government has taken up many initiatives under the Digital India campaign. Discussed below are few such important initiatives:

1. **DigiLockers** – This flagship initiative aims at 'Digital Empowerment' of the citizen by providing access to authentic digital documents to citizen's digital document wallet
2. **E-Hospitals** – It is a Hospital Management Information System (HMIS) which is a one-stop solution in connecting patients, hospitals and doctors through a single digital platform. Till February 2021, as many as 420 e-Hospitals had been established under the Digital India campaign
3. **E-Pathshala** – Developed by NCERT, e-Pathshala showcases and disseminates all educational e-resources including textbooks, audio, video, periodicals and a variety of other print and non-print materials through the website and mobile app
4. **BHIM** – Bharat Interface for Money is an app that makes payment transactions simple, easy and quick using Unified Payments Interface (UPI)

Impact of Digital India Campaign

Since its launch in 2015, the Digital India campaign has left its impact in various fields:

- Around 12000 post office branches in the rural areas have been linked electronically.
- The Make in India initiative has improved the electronic manufacturing sector in India
- Digital India plan could boost GDP up to \$1 trillion by 2025
- Healthcare and education sector has also seen a boost
- Improvement in online infrastructure will enhance the economy of the country

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