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INTRODUCTION:

- The complete transformation of the processes of Governance using the implementation of Information and Communication technology is called E-Governance.
- It aims to bring faster and transparent service delivery, accountability, information sharing and people participation in the decision making and Government processes.
- E-Governance initiatives in India took a broader dimension in the mid-1990s for wider sectoral applications with a policy emphasis on reaching out to rural areas through maximising the efforts towards delivery of citizen centric services.

NATIONAL E-GOVERNANCE PLAN (NEGP):

- The National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) was launched in 2006 with a vision to make all government services accessible to the common man in his/her locality, through delivery outlets named Common Service Centres (CSCs) and ensure efficiency, transparency & reliability of such services at affordable costs to realize the basic needs of the common man.
- 31 Mission Mode Projects covering a wide range of domains, viz. agriculture, land records, health, education passports, police, courts, municipalities, commercial taxes, treasuries, etc. were initiated.

DIGITAL INDIA:

- In order to transform the entire ecosystem of public services through the use of

**9 PILLARS OF DIGITAL INDIA**

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Technology, the Government of India has launched the 'Digital India' programme in 2015 with the vision to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy.

**CSC-CREATING RURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP REDEFINING GOVERNANCE**

- It was envisaged under Digital India that for consolidated delivery of electronic services e-Gov services, there is a need to integrate all service applications/platforms working in silos with a common national level platform called Common Service Centre (CSC), now commonly called as 'Digital Seva'.
- The primary objective of the CSC is to provide e-governance services within the reach of the citizen, by creating the physical service delivery ICT infrastructure.
- Presently, CSC 2.0 model is completely based on a service delivery / transaction oriented self-sustainable entrepreneurship model with no viability gap funding for hardware and infrastructure support to Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) from Government of India.
- To ensure standardization across all States/UTs, "Digital Seva Kendras" national brand along with co-branding of States/UTs has been introduced.
- With a unique identification number of CSC and GIS mapping of each centre, this would create a transparent and accountable monitoring framework for the e-services being delivered through CSCs and help the government to fill the gap in establishing a self-sustaining CSC network across the States/UTs.

**PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN CSC ECOSYSTEM:**

- Government has already issued guidelines to give preference to women as VLEs.
- To encourage more participation of women, success stories are being published in monthly e-Magazine Tarang and newsletters.

**FUNCTIONS OF CSCs:**

- Service delivery centres for - Government to Citizen, Business to consumer, Utility services, etc.,
- Permanent enrolment Centres for Aadhaar and Aadhaar Printing centres.
- Business correspondent Agents (BCAs) under financial inclusion for banking services and services under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana.
- Information centre for various schemes of the Government for creating awareness leading to digital empowerment among the citizens.
- As Insurance service centres, Educational and Skill Development centres
- As electoral registration centres.
OUTCOMES AND ADVANTAGES OF CSCs:

- Transparent and timely delivery of government and other eServices at affordable cost and better citizen experience.
- Reducing citizen's efforts and resources in availing services within their localities by eliminating their visit to Government offices for the same and common man's increased faith in the system.
- Integrated framework for delivery and dissemination of various government initiatives and benefits through ICT enablement.
- Introducing change agents for skill development, education and trainings, financial inclusion and indirect employment generation.
- Acting as last mile distribution units for various governments' direct benefits to marginalised / backward communities.
- Encouraging more and more participation of women to become VLEs and increasing their contribution in the social and economic development.
- The CSCs are acting a medium for rural citizens to get digitally empowered and interact with the government and its schemes.

RECENT INITIATIVES:

- A robust and scalable CSC National Portal called 'Digital Seva Portal' to enable dissemination of services through a universal technological platform at all the CSCs
across the country, thereby making the e-services, particularly G2C services, accessible anywhere across the country.

- E-Commerce platform "vlebazaar" has been launched for showcasing the products of rural India through CSCs.
- CSC-SPV partnered with National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) and launched DigiPay in December, 2016 for CSC Network on Aadhaar Enabled payment System (AePS) platform for delivering online banking services across the country.
- Bharat Bill Payment Operating Unit (BBPOU) will facilitate a cashless society through migration of bill payments from cash to electronic channel.
- As GST Suvidha Provider, CSC - SPV needs to perform various functions supporting various stakeholders, mainly merchants, establishments and persons required to fulfil compliance as prescribed under GST regime.
- CSC - SPV launched Wi - Fi choupal, a rural Wi - Fi facility, signifying a new era in providing connectivity in the villages.
- Through the National Digital Literacy Mission, the CSC - VLEs and partners worked with inspiring enthusiasm towards the goal of making at least one person from each family digitally literate.
- Apart from NDLM, basic computer training is also being implemented for Madrassa students from the minority community in four states under Cyber gram Yojana.

**CHALLENGES AGAINST IMPLEMENTATION OF CSCS:**

- Connectivity: Internet bandwidth is not adequate & stable in far flung and remote areas due to inaccessibility.
- BharatNet: BharatNet project for creating network infrastructure by connecting all Gram Panchayats in the country through Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) is yet to be implemented.

**SUPPORTS FROM THE STATES/UTS:**

- One of the key objectives of present CSC initiative is consolidated delivery of e-Gov Services by integrating all service access portals available at States/UT level with the national level universal & integrated platform of Digital Seva (CSC).
- For this, continuous supports from the respective States/UTs are pre-requisites.
- CSCs are also being enabled as White Label Business Correspondents (BCs) for interoperable banking services.

**CONCLUSION:**

- Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) continues to strive towards improving CSC services and accessibility for meeting the Government mandate of a digitally and socially inclusive society.
• Government is committed to promote rural entrepreneurship through ICT and build a sustainable model providing gainful employment to citizens.
• Government strives for redefining the service delivery through digital technology and framework.
• Various types of citizen centric eServices can be delivered through national level integrated platform of CSC-Digital Seva, once State/UT level service access portals are integrated with Digital Seva portal.
RURAL TRANSFORMATION AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

INTRODUCTION:
• A large proportion of demographic advantage that India enjoys resides in the rural areas.
• Large number of youth from rural areas migrate to urban areas and end up doing low paid jobs due to low levels of education or illiteracy.
• Steps have been taken to improve the employability as also employment opportunities for these youth, but lack of awareness as also skills, restricts their movement. Technology can play a critical role in this regard.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT SCENARIO IN RURAL INDIA:
• The rural labour market has witnessed a marginal increase in the overall labour force participation rate from 55.5 percent in 2012-13 to 5.8 in 2015-16 (Labour Bureau, 2017) and marginal decline in unemployment rate from 3.5 percent in 2012-13 to .4 in 2015-16.
• Women in rural areas are primarily engaged in handicrafts, handlooms, basic food processing and micro-enterprises such as papad and pickle making etc.
• Only 7.1 per cent males and 4.5 per cent females received higher secondary education.
• A smaller proportion of rural persons reported completing graduation and post-graduation.
• The low level of education results in poor skill level resulting in access only to low paid jobs which affects the purchasing power and quality of life.

UNLOCKING THE RURAL INDIA POTENTIAL WITH DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY:
MAJOR INITIATIVES
• The Government of India launched the 'Digital India' programme in 2014.
• It focusses on access to high speed internet as a core utility for all Gram Panchayats, unique, lifelong, online and authenticable digital identity; mobile phone and bank account to enable participation in digital and financial space at the individual level, easy access to a Common Service Centre that provides e-services of the government in rural and remote locations; universal digital literacy and so on.
• Government has taken up BharatNet in mission mode to connect all 2,50,000 Gram Panchayats (over 600 million rural citizens) in the country with 100 mbps broadband.
• 'Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan' (PMGDISHA), has been launched to usher in digital literacy in rural India by March 2019 by making 6 crore rural households digitally literate.

• The DigiGaon initiative is being launched to provide tele-medicine, education and skills through use of digital technologies.

• This initiative too, is bound to create more employment in rural areas.

• For inclusive development, the government is promoting digital inclusion by providing mobile connectivity to over 55,000 villages by March 2019 and initiating measures like Jan-Dhan account, debit cards, Aadhar Pay, Bharat interface for Money (BHIM).

• e-NAM (electronic trading platform for National Agricultural Market) has been launched by the government in 2015 which provides a unified market through online trading platform both at State and National level that promotes uniformity and transparency in auction process, and access to a nationwide market for the farmer.

IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT SKILL DEVELOPMENT:

• The network of the Common Service Centres (CSCs) that are functional and are being strengthened as part of the Digital India programme, deliver more than 300 digital services like Aadhar enrolment, ticket booking, utility bill payments, tele-medicine, skilling services, digital literacy etc. in small towns and rural areas.

• Under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY), the flagship programme to provide loans to promote rural entrepreneurship, loans are available for non-agricultural activities and activities allied to agriculture such as dairy, poultry, bee keeping etc.

• The flagship skill development scheme of the Government, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) benefit youth who are either school/college dropouts or unemployed.
• Training Centres under PMKVY also impart training in Soft Skills, Entrepreneurship, Financial and Digital Literacy.

• Arogya Sakhi, an initiative of Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP), a learning and development organization, uses a mobile application that helps rural women entrepreneurs deliver preventive health care at rural doorsteps.

• The rural job scene is undergoing radical transformation with organized players taking jobs into villages and helping rural youth find gainful employment.

• In one such instance, Rural Shores, a company that specializes in employment.

• In one such instance, Rural Shores, a company that specializes in employing rural youth in Knowledge Process Outsourcing (KPO) jobs after imparting relevant training to them, has provided employment to over 2500 employees (almost 50 percent of them women) in 17 centres in 10 states.

• More such initiatives can bring about a greater transformation in the rural employment landscape.

CONCLUSION:

• While the rural landscape is experiencing a great wave of digital and information technology, it also presents abundant opportunities for employment generation.
• Skill development and up-gradation plays an important role in enhancing employability of men and women, particularly the youth.
• Concerted and fast-tracked efforts can ensure that we are able to tap the vast potential that rural areas have for skill development and employment as well as raise the standards of existing employment.
REVOLUTIONIZING INDIAN AGRICULTURE:

USE OF ICT

- National Policy for Farmers emphasizes the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at village level for reaching out to the farmers with the correct advisories and requisite information.
- National e-Governance Plan in Agriculture (NeGP-A): NeGP-A is propose to be implemented across the country and aims at offering Government to Citizen/Farmer, Government to Business and Government to Government agricultural services in an integrated manner through the Central Agriculture Portal (CAP) and State Agriculture Portals (SAPs).

INFORMATION ON AGRICULTURE AND MARKETING CHANNELS:

- Information and communication technology in agriculture (ICT in agriculture), also known as e-agriculture, is developing and applying innovative ways to use ICTS in the
rural domain, with a primary focus on agriculture through improved information and communication processes.

- In this context, ICT is used as an umbrella term encompassing all information and communication technologies including devices, networks, mobiles, services and applications.

**KISAN CALL CENTRE (KCC) INITIATIVE:**

- The Kisan Call Centre is a combination of ICT (Information Communication Technology) and Agriculture technology.
- KCC enables farmers to have direct discussions with the subject matter experts who are able to analyze the problem effectively and provide the solution directly.

**NATIONAL AGRICULTURE MARKET (NAM):**

- It is a pan-India electronic trading portal which networks the existing APMC mandis to create unified national market for agricultural commodities.
- The NAM Portal provides a single window service for all APMC related information and services.
- This includes commodity arrivals & prices, buy & sell trade offers, provision to respond to trade offers, among other services.
- While material flow (agriculture produce) continue to happen through mandis, an online market reduces transaction costs and information asymmetry.

**PRADHAN MANTRI FASAL BIMA YOJANA (PMFBY):**

- PMFBY has been launched for implementation from Kharif 2016.
- There is no upper limit on Government subsidy for this scheme.
- Farmers will get claims against the full sum insured, without any reduction.

**'NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR SPACE APPLICATION IN AGRICULTURE (NPSAA)':**

- It is a comprehensive platform to harvest the advantages of space technology in agriculture & allied sectors.

**CONCLUSION:**

- Though India has a strong and fast Growing IT industry, access to ICTs remains very low, particularly in rural areas.
- If right information is provided timely, it can help to develop the agriculture sector. It helps to take timely action, prepare strategies for next season, speculate the market changes, and avoid unfavorable circumstances.
SMART VILLAGES: A WAY FORWARD

INTRODUCTION:
- Villages form the building blocks of our country.
- Agriculture, considered to be the principal source of income in the villages, contributes to around 17% of Indian GDP, which is much higher than the world average of 6.1%.

SMART INDIA:
- With improved quality of life comes the need of better living.
- While Urban India has leapfrogged into an age of digitization, embracing the concept of "Smart City", the need to convert villages into "Smart Villages" also felt.

THE SHYAMA PRASAD MUKHERJI RURBAN MISSION (SPMRM):
- It aims at development of rural growth clusters which have latent potential for growth, in all States and UTs, which would trigger overall development in the region.
• These clusters would be developed by provisioning of economic activities, developing skills & local entrepreneurship and providing infrastructure amenities.
• The Rurban Mission will thus develop a cluster of Smart Villages.

CLUSTER IDENTIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT:
• The Ministry of Rural Development is adopting a scientific process of cluster selection which involves an objective analysis at the District, Sub District and Village level, of the demography, economy, tourism and pilgrimage significance and transportation corridor impact.

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF DIFFERENT COMPONENTS:
• Skill Development: The Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikash Yojana, under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship aims to enable a large number of Indian youth to take up industry-relevant skill training that will help them in securing a better livelihood.
• Digital Literacy: Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharata Abhiyan on cashless transactions through mobile phones, the course content would also have emphasis on Digital Wallets, Mobile Banking, Unified Payments Interface (UPI), Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) and Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AIPS), etc.
• Agro-based Scheme – SAMPADA (Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters) under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries aims to supplement agriculture, modernize processing and decrease agro-waste.
• Sanitation: The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Gramin) aims at making rural India open-defecation free by 2019 by encouraging households to build toilets, thus improving the level of cleanliness in rural India.
• Drinking Water Supply: The National Rural Drinking Water Programme aims to providing piped water supply to rural households.
• Street Light: To improve street light conditions, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has installed solar PV through the National Solar Mission.
• Road Connectivity and Public Transport: The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana is meant to provide good road connectivity in rural India.
• LPG gas connection: The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana aims at providing deposit-free LPG connections to BPL family in the name of adult women.

CHALLENGES:
• It needs to be kept in mind that only if other socio-economic indicators are good and the basic needs of the village are already met, then can a smart village with a digital
future be made possible.

- A digital future can only be built on top of a physical one.
- The preparedness of the villages needs to be taken into account for any program to be implemented.
- It needs to be checked that each village has a primary school for the children where there is separate toilets for both male and female children.
- As the Government wants to upgrade the education facility, it needs to be ensured that at most, five villages within a radius of 10 kms get a higher secondary school and a Degree college.
- The Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) workers are appointed under the NRHM.
- They are trained to provide basic medical care to the villagers.
- The ASHA workers along with the Ausiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM) form the first interface between the village community and healthcare.
- Under the Janani Suraksha Yojana, eligible pregnant women are entitled for cash assistance irrespective of the age of mother and number of children for giving birth in a government or accredited private health facility.
- Through the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, toilets are to be constructed in every house of the village.
- Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana-Har Khet Ko Paani ensures bringing more agricultural land under irrigation. Many schemes in the agriculture sector are undertaken using the Long Term irrigation Fund under NABARD.
- JAM trinity of Jan Dhan Account, Aadhaar number and mobile connectivity is expected to be with every Indian.
- Aiming to provide bank account to every Indian, the Banking penetration is important in rural areas.
- Moreover appointment of Banking correspondents or Bank Mitras is the need of the hour to tackle this situation.
- The use of non-renewable source of energy, especially solar energy is designed for electrifying most villages.
FINANCIAL INCLUSION IN RURAL AREAS THROUGH "DIGITAL INDIA"

INTRODUCTION:

- The focus of financial inclusion is to ensure the coverage of each household in the country by opening savings bank account and providing Banking services such as micro credit, RUPAY card, Aadhar card services, financial literacy and empowerment of women, insurance and pension services.
- It is endeavour of all stake holders including Government to focus on issues like putting in place an effective system of tackling technology issues, solving connectivity problems, spreading financial literacy in public, innovating suitable products to suit suitable needs of public and above all, going digital in all process.

RECENT INITIATIVES:

- Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana: It is India's National Mission for Financial Inclusion to ensure access to financial services, namely Savings & Deposit Accounts, Remittance, Credit, Insurance, and Pension in an affordable manner.
- Aadhaar: It is objective is to collect the biometric and demographic data of residents, store them in a centralized database, and issue a 12 digit unique identity number called Aadhaar.
- JAM (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile) Trinity: It refers to the Government of India initiative to link Jan Dhan accounts, Mobile numbers and Aadhaar number of Indians to plug the leakages of government subsidies.
- Direct Benefit Transfer or DBT: This program aims to transfer subsidies directly to the people through their bank accounts. Payment is made in the bank accounts of the beneficiary using the Aadhaar Payment Bridge of NPCI.
• Digital boost to MGNREGA: helps the implementation agencies with live data from the worksites, an online and real time updation of data base, real time visibility of data for complete transparency, and location of assets with geo tagging for easy verification.

• The Postal department’s e-Money initiative enables India Post to remit money next day to the doorstep that earlier took about a week.

• Twitter Samvad: This will enable the citizens to know about new government initiatives and actions. It is a service that lets leaders and government agencies communicate with the people through tweets and SMS.

• Digital Life Certificates: With this, the pensioner will do away with the requirement of submitting a physical life certificate in November each year and can now digitally provide proof of their existence to authorities for continuity of pension every year.

• Digital locker-India: This initiative eliminates the need for people to carry the hard copies of the certificates issued by states, municipal agencies, and other bodies. Birth certificates, school and college leaving certificates, residence and marriage proof, and even PAN cards will be digitized.

• PRAGATI: It is an interactive platform launched for public grievance redressal.

• Digidhan Mela: The event will focus on ways and benefits of the system and will also address the concerns regarding payments and commissions charged by the respective organizations.

• BHIM App for e-transactions, Aadhaar seeding etc: Through this App, the customer can access his bank account and then make payment or send a request to collect payment by directly approaching the settlement system.

• DigiGAON: For imparting knowledge on basic education and health services.

• BHUVAN: It is a satellite based geo platform by ISRO, reaching out to the rural people. It acts like a clearing house for satellite data.

• CHAMAN (Coordinated program on Horticulture Assessment and Management using Geo-Informatics.
  Digital inventory of all horticulture zones in the country.
  Deciding cold storage hubs.
  Managing inflation through accurate data of food stock.

• FASAL (Forecasting Agricultural output using Space, Agro-meteorology and Land based observations.
  Monitor crop health.
  Can be used directly to study crop locations.

• NADAMS (National Agricultural Drought Assessment and Monitoring System)
  Remote sensing real time information on current or development drought at state, district and sub district level.
• Android Apps: Many Android Apps are new tools in the hands of the officials and farmers, helping them to connect with the digital platforms at the comforts of their homes through mobile devices such as smartphones and phablets.

**CONCLUSION:**

• Sufficient budgetary support for creation of such a massive digital infrastructure to reach 2.80 lakh gram panchayats through digital connectivity to reduce digital gap can take the country into a different direction.

• PMJDY accounts, Mobile hand set, Aadhaar etc through various Government initiatives can help in achieving the last mile connectivity for the prosperity of the country.
CHANGING CONDITIONS OF WOMEN IN DIGITAL AGE: POSSIBILITIES AND PROSPECTS

DIGITAL INDIA PROGRAMME:

- Digital rights have the potential to harness new energies and bring about a more equitable society.
- This may seem as a probable possibility but has remained elusive for women, even in urban areas as well.
- Women constitute half the sky but have remained either invisible or relegated to being inconsequential in scheme of things in the past.
- "Closing the gender gap could generate a 30 per cent increase in the per capita income of a hypothetical average Asian economy in one generation" (ADB 2015).
- The preamble to SDG clearly states that its sustainable development goals and targets "seek to realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls"; women, primarily in societies that have a rigid patriarchal system, are disregarded as relevant to "the balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental" (UN, 2015).

BRIDGING THE GENDER GAP:

- A critical element in changing lives is the role information plays in critical and emergency situation as well as a regular process of information sharing.
- This can be effectively achieved if digital platforms are not just used for providing information, but assist through a network within women's social and cultural context.
- These 'glocal networks' are more sustainable and require less capital intensive measures.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES:

- Girls drop off the education radar because of social and prejudicial cultural practices.
- What can help to bring in change is to bring women in mainstream by linking literacy and learning through digital platforms to fostering better informed citizenry.
- The STEM subjects, such as Australia's SAGE program, require a huge boost to harness the minds and abilities which can translate into more knowledge based skills.
- Girls are less likely to study STEM subjects and hence, women are less likely to be active in technology related fields.
This active approach to use digital literacy programmers for improving participation of girls in STEM programme bespeaks of a holistic approach to education for girls.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION OF WOMEN:

- Issues of diversity and inclusion are important elements of digital culture.
- 'E-commerce has a transformational impact with opportunities emerging in areas such as made-to-order meals and handicrafts among others, which women could capitalize on.
- As a first step, financial inclusion of women can be accelerated by digital literacy and ability of banks to become more proactive in setting digitized operational norms for a transparent, effective and timely response system in marginal setting as well.
- Within a digitized ecosystem, 'financial inclusion' for women can have a multiplier impact on their entrepreneurship, economic growth and wealth creation.
- Growth in internet penetration will have several ramifications, including on internet commerce, delivery of financial and healthcare services as well as e-governance.
- "Most of the SDGs mirror India’s own national policies", including the Food Security Act, housing for all, Clean India campaign, National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, programme for the girl child.
- Progress on education cannot be achieved without the focus on women and girls.
- "Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls is an imperative for the SDGs and also an imperative for India," Now is the time to pick up the tools of digitization and start putting them to work.
- If we can do so, the prize is immense: more robust and inclusive growth and better lives for women and their families.

RECENT INITIATIVES:

- It is increasingly realised that digital technology's attributes as an interactive platform and device (artificial intelligence in the form of digital voice assistant) will unfold new ways of governance and business.
- The new initiative taken by the government of e-Kranti (Transforming e-Governance for Transforming Governance) in 2015 is a reflection of an emerging perspective of holistic development rather than sectoral approach.
- The National Portal of India provides an ideal front-end for these initiatives as it is a single window access to information and services being provided by the various Indian Government entities'.
- The great beneficiaries would be women who would have a higher stake in such transformative changes since their lives require a upend direction of social and economic change.
DIGITAL RURAL REVOLUTION - RETHINKING EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION:

- Education is digital rural India is an indisputable step forward to empower rural communities with capacity building and training programmes and make them digitally literate.
- It is a foundation to facilitate deployment of rural citizen services through digital means.
- To match with the need of the day, it is important to create a digital date house at every rural community level to make them economically viable, and digital rural education is the right way to approach that.
- It is for sure a fundamental move to generate social, cultural and economic advantages for rural communities.

EMPOWERING EDUCATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY:

- It is essential to implement the new digitised education tools in rural India.
- Introduction of such tools can solve the problem of mass reach, quality and relevant education.
- Teachers will be available via virtual classrooms, thereby plugging the problem of unwillingness in educationists to be physically present in many such areas.
- One of the major pillars of Digital India is eKrant, under which immense emphasis has been given to digitising rural India through eTechnology, especially in the domain of education.
- E-Basta: This project has created a framework to make school books accessible in digital form as e-books to be read and used on tablets and laptops.
- National Digital Literacy Mission (NDLM): To build education and capacity programmes that will help rural communities to take lead in the global digital economy and help them in maintaining the competitiveness and also shape a technologically empowered society.
- The PMGDISHA being initiated under Digital India Programme would cover 6 crore households in rural areas to make them digitally literate. This would empower the citizens by providing them access to information, knowledge and skills for operating computers / digital access devices.
- Digital Classroom: With no or negligible access to the internet, the education provided in rural schools lacks any sort of relevance. While urban classrooms are...
upgraded with modern technology such as digital classes, meritorious rural students are deprived of such facilities. The digital classroom refers to the classroom where student learning and interaction with the instructor and peers are fully supported through strategic used of information and communication technologies (ICTs).

SWAYAM:
- India enters a new era of digitized education through its initiative named SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active – Learning for Young Aspiring Minds).
- SWAYAM is implemented by Ministry of HRD and aims at offering online courses to Indian citizens by Professors of distinguished educational institutions like IITs, IIMs and other Central Universities.
- SWAYAM is a 'Made in India' IT platform which offers interactive courses free of cost from Class IX to post graduation, which can be accessed by anyone, anywhere at any time.

ONLINE EDUCATION:
- Online education especially in rural areas is driven by the demand for quality education.
- The online channel provides a conductive educational avenue for students coming from distant villages who require focused and individual learning.

BIOMETRIC TEACHER’S ATTENDANCE:
- To address teacher absenteeism biometric attendance of all teachers is to be
implemented in primary schools for each scheduled class / lecture / session / distinct from the present system, where it is morning and evening to ostensibly record arrival and departures with little control on the activities during the working hours.

- The implementation of biometric attendance at schools will be of great help not only in addressing the problem of absentee teachers, but also in strengthening students' strength.

FREE WI-FI IN ALL SCHOOLS:

- The Central Government plans to provide free Wi-Fi to 2.5 lakh schools within the next five years. Devices such as tablet, as provided to students in Central Universities, are to be distributed among rural students as well.

DIGITAL LITERACY:

- Digital learning is slowly but definitely becoming the direction everyone is stepping towards.
- Hybrid, collaborative and online learning processes are changing education.
- Social media is also being used as a learning tool.
- Digital education is breaking the numerous barriers that are preventing students in rural India from receiving quality education in the physically bound classrooms.

CONCLUSION:

- With the Digital India programme's vision to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy, the education sector in India is poised to witness major growth in the years to come.