

Driving Digital Transformation in Gram Panchayats

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Key Takeaways

In August 2025, Ministry of Panchayati Raj launched **SabhaSaar**, an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered meeting summarizer tool.

Under **SVAMITVA Scheme**,

- As of August 2025, **2.63 Crore** property cards have been prepared in **1.73 lakh** villages.
- As of July 2025, drone survey has been completed in **3.23 lakh** villages.

For FY 2024-25,

- **2.54 lakh Gram Panchayats** have successfully uploaded their **Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPD)** on the **eGramSwaraj portal**.
- **2.41 lakh Gram Panchayats** have completed **online transactions** for 15th Finance Commission grants.

Introduction

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) has launched a series of digital reforms to strengthen Gram Panchayats. These reforms aim to make governance faster, more transparent and more inclusive. Tools now range from artificial intelligence (AI) meeting summarisers to geo-spatial mapping platforms, digital accounting systems and citizen-facing mobile apps. This shift also reflects the Government's broader vision under *Digital India* and *Atmanirbhar Bharat*.



Key Initiatives in Digital Governance

Initiatives such as **SabhaSaar** - an AI-powered tool for recording and summarising Gram Sabha proceedings, **SVAMITVA** for digital land mapping and property rights, **eGramSwaraj** for integrated online planning, accounting and monitoring, **Meri Panchayat mobile app** for citizen access to local data, and **Gram Manchitra** for geo-spatial planning - are transforming the way Panchayats function. These platforms not only improve transparency and efficiency but also empower citizens to participate more actively in local governance. Together, they reflect the Government's vision of harnessing technology to strengthen grassroots democracy.

SabhaSaar: AI for Gram Sabha Meetings



Enabling Panchayats to Prioritize Participation, With SabhaSaar Managing the Minutes.



The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) launched **SabhaSaar** in August 2025. SabhaSaar is an Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool that creates structured minutes of meetings from the audio or video of Gram Sabha and other Panchayat gatherings. Until now, preparing minutes was a slow, manual and often inconsistent exercise. SabhaSaar changes this by producing accurate summaries in real time. It is linked with **Bhashini**, the National Language Translation Mission, which allows it to work in **14 Indian languages**. This makes it accessible to communities across diverse regions. With the help of SabhaSaar, Gram Panchayat officials can now focus more on governance and service delivery, while the tool handles the documentation work, thus ensuring real-time, unbiased records and greater transparency.

What is Bhashini?

BHASHINI (BHASHa Interface for India) is a landmark initiative to make digital content and services accessible in all Indian languages. It supports the goals of the **Digital India Programme** by promoting inclusivity and equal access. As the **National Language Translation Mission (NLTM)**, BHASHINI uses advanced artificial intelligence and natural language processing tools to bridge language gaps. It enables citizens to use digital services in the language they know best. The mission is implemented by the **Digital India BHASHINI Division**, a division of the Digital India Corporation under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.



SVAMITVA: Mapping Rural India



The **SVAMITVA** (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas) Scheme was launched by the **Prime Minister** on **24 April 2020**, on **National Panchayati Raj Day**. The scheme gives rural households legal ownership papers for the homes and land they occupy. Using **drones and advanced mapping tools**, it clearly marks property boundaries. With these documents, families can obtain bank loans, resolve disputes and make better use of their assets, while Gram Panchayats gain by improving property tax collection and enabling better resource planning.

The scheme is implemented by **Ministry of Panchayati Raj** with support from the Survey of India, with the **National Informatics Centre Services Inc. (NICS)** as the technology partner. It has an approved cost of **₹566.23 crore** from **FY 2020-21** to **FY 2024-25**, with an extension up to **FY 2025-26**.

SVAMITVA has ended decades of reliance on revenue officials and patwaris for demarcating land ownership. The programme is an excellent model of ***Global Model of Citizen-Centric Governance***. It enables villagers to map their own land with modern tools, giving them authority and security. Its success has drawn attention worldwide and inspired other countries to explore similar approaches.

BharatNet: Backbone of Rural Connectivity

The Government of India launched **BharatNet** in October 2011, to bridge the digital divide. The project aims to deliver affordable, high-speed internet to every Gram Panchayat. Implemented by the Ministry of Communications, BharatNet seeks to empower rural communities, support inclusive growth and bring villages closer to urban standards of connectivity. It is not only an infrastructure project but also the backbone of India's march towards a digital nation.

Through funding under the **Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN)**, the Government is rolling out schemes to provide **high-speed internet, high-quality mobile and digital services** in rural, remote and border regions. BharatNet is being implemented in phases to cover all Gram Panchayats. The project provides broadband through Wi-Fi hotspots, Fibre to the Home (FTTH) connections and other services.

The Union Cabinet has approved an amended programme to strengthen the network in ring topology, upgrade existing infrastructure and extend services to about **3.8 lakh non-GP villages** on demand. According to the **Registrar General of India (RGI)**, as of 30 June 2025, out of **6,44,131 villages**, nearly **6,26,055 villages** already have internet access through **3G or 4G** mobile networks.

So far, more than **13 lakh Fibre to the Home (FTTH) connections** have been commissioned under BharatNet. These connections support online services such as **e-education, e-health, e-governance and e-commerce**. Farmers are also using the network to expand their knowledge of agriculture and stay updated on the latest practices and technologies. With BharatNet connectivity in Gram Panchayats, apps such as Gram Samvaad, Meri Panchayat, National Pest Surveillance System (NPSS) and PM Kisan bring governance, welfare and farm services directly to villager's phones. This strengthens transparency, participation and rural empowerment.

eGramSwaraj: Work-Based Accounting and Planning

Under the **Digital India Programme**, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj is implementing the **e-Panchayat Mission Mode Project (MMP)** to make Panchayats more transparent, accountable and effective as local self-governments. Building on earlier milestones, and to strengthen e-Governance in **Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)** across the country, the ministry launched **eGramSwaraj** under the e-Panchayat MMP on *24 April 2020*, a user-friendly web-based portal.

This is a work-based, comprehensive application that brings together all core functions of Panchayats on a single digital platform. It covers **decentralised planning, budgeting, accounting, monitoring, progress reporting, asset management, and also enables online payments**. The application has a user base of more than **2.7 Lakh Panchayati Raj Institutions**, spread across **28 States** and **6 UTs**.



Meri Panchayat App: Transparency in Citizen's Hands

Meri Panchayat App serves as an integrated mobile governance platform, designed and developed by the **National Informatics Centre (NIC)**. It empowers rural communities by promoting transparency, accountability and citizen participation in Panchayat affairs. The initiative reflects the Government's commitment to strengthening local self-governance and advancing the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030**. The app is powered by **eGramSwaraj** and linked with other portals of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and the Government of India.

The app empowers over **25 lakh elected representatives** and nearly **95 crore rural residents** across **2.65 lakh Gram Panchayats**. The platform promotes digital inclusion, transparency and citizen participation in rural governance.

Through Meri Panchayat App, citizens can effortlessly access, on their mobile devices:

- Real-time Panchayat budgets, receipts, payments and development plans.
- Details of elected representatives and local functionaries.
- Information on public infrastructure and civic services within the Panchayat.
- Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDs) with project tracking.
- Weather forecasts at the Panchayat level.
- Social audit tools, fund use data and grievance redressal with geo-tagged and geo-fenced features.
- Multilingual interface with support for over **12 Indian languages** for inclusiveness.

Panchayat NIRNAY: Digital Meetings and Decisions

The **Panchayat NIRNAY portal** is a real-time monitoring system for Gram Sabha meetings. It is one of the key pillars of local self-governance in rural India. The portal helps schedule meetings, notify citizens of agendas in advance and encourage wider participation. It records decisions of Gram Sabhas and makes them available for ready reference. This improves transparency and accountability in the way Panchayats function.

The system replaces paper-based processes with a fully automated workflow. It allows Panchayats to share best practices across the country and manage meetings more effectively. The primary goal of Panchayat NIRNAY is to make Gram Sabha meetings participatory, transparent and vibrant.

Gram Manchitra: Geo-Spatial Planning Tool

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj launched the **Gram Manchitra** Geographic Information System (GIS) application (<https://grammanchitra.gov.in>). Platform to help Gram Panchayats prepare plans using geo-spatial

technology. It offers a unified digital map where officials can visualise developmental works across different sectors and align them with the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP).

Gram Manchitra provides a range of planning tools. These include identifying suitable sites for new projects, tracking local assets, estimating project costs and assessing likely impacts. By using GIS, Panchayats are able to design practical and achievable development plans, supported by clear data and evidence.



Recognition and Rewards

The National Awards for e-Governance (NAeG) 2025 introduced a new category to honour **Grassroots Level Initiatives for Deepening Service Delivery at Gram Panchayats**. The award highlights how Panchayats are harnessing digital tools to improve transparency and citizen services. This year, more than **1.45 lakh** entries were received from **26 States and Union Territories**, reflecting the growing digital momentum at the village level. **Rohini Gram Panchayat of Dhule, Maharashtra, secured the Gold Award**, while **West Majlishpur Gram Panchayat of Tripura received Silver**. **Jury Awards were also conferred on Palsana Gram Panchayat in Gujarat and Suakati Gram Panchayat in Odisha**. Along with recognition, the winners received a financial incentive of **Rs.10 lakh for Gold Award** and **Rs.5 lakh for Silver Award** to further strengthen welfare and service delivery initiatives, showcasing how grassroots innovation is shaping a more digital and responsive Panchayati Raj system.

Conclusion

The digital journey of Gram Panchayats marks a turning point in India's rural governance. From AI-driven meeting records to geo-spatial planning and citizen-focused mobile apps, technology is reshaping how villages plan, decide and deliver. These reforms not only make Panchayats more transparent and accountable but also bring citizens closer to decision-making. By breaking barriers of language, distance and information, digital platforms are strengthening grassroots democracy and empowering communities. As these initiatives expand, India's villages are set to emerge as true partners in building a Digital Bharat.

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Lok Sabha

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