

## 950m Indians Still Don't Have Access to Internet

Our Bureau

**New Delhi:** As many as 950 million Indians still don't have access to the Internet despite lower data tariffs and falling smartphone prices, an Assocham-Deloitte finding revealed.

"Internet penetration is increasing in India, the access to affordable broadband, smart devices and monthly data packages is required to spread digital literacy to make their ends meet," the study titled 'Strategic national measures to combat cybercrime,' released on Monday said.

**Assocham-Deloitte study says efforts are necessary to augment digital literacy**

As the NDA-led government is banking on a host of Internet-driven services for the Digital India initiative, the joint study pointed out at the country's significant skills shortfall, which is merely 2.3% over a global average of 50%, adding that efforts are necessary to augment digital literacy.

"This (skill) shortage is accentuated in the electronic and digital sectors. However, to achieve inclusive growth, skilled and well-trained manpower is critical," the association said in a statement. It added that there has been some progress towards developing skills required to support Digital India and e-governance initiatives.

"Existing government infrastructure assets should be further leveraged for the provision of digital services at remote locations," it said. The study suggested that digital literacy be boosted by providing institutional trainings in schools, colleges and universities, and accelerating partnerships with global technology leaders and using the workforce trained under Skill India.

# Internet connectivity still out of reach for 950 m Indians

New Delhi, Dec 26

**I**NDIA may have the world's second largest internet user base, but connectivity remains out of reach for nearly 950 million citizens, a report said on Monday.

"Even with the internet data plans in India being among the cheapest in the world and the average retail price of smartphones steadily declining, connectivity is still out of the reach of nearly 950 million Indians," according to the ASSOCHAM-DeLoitte joint study.

India currently has about 350 million internet users, second only to China. Internet penetration is in-

creasing in India and the access to affordable broadband, smart devices and monthly data packages are required to spread digital literacy to make their ends meet, the study titled 'Strategic national measures to combat cyber-crime' said.

Existing government infrastructure assets should be further leveraged for provision of digital services at remote locations, it said.

The study added that digital literacy needs to be increased by providing institutional trainings in schools, colleges and universities. It pitched for accelerating partnerships with global technology leaders and using the workforce trained under Skill



India to impart trainings.

An integrated approach between 'Digital India' and 'Skill India' needs to be constructed to design programmes and impart training, it said.

The report called for incentivising private sector players for developing infrastructure, providing services and promoting digital

literacy as part of the Digital India programme.

"Start-ups should be involved to create and customise apps to local needs to increase adoption of digital technology," it said, adding

that a framework needs to be defined for participation of private sector in skill development programmes defining their role, expectations in terms of investments, content and job guarantees.

PTI



## 950 mn Indians still not connected to the virtual world: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
New Delhi, 26 December

India may have the world's second largest number of internet users, but nearly 950 million citizens are still not connected to the virtual world, a report said on Monday.

"Even as the data plans in India being among the cheapests in the world and the average retail price of smartphones steadily declining, connectivity is still out of the reach for nearly 950 million

Indians," according to a study conducted by Assocham and Deloitte jointly

India currently has about 350 million internet users, second only to China.

Internet penetration is increasing and the access to affordable broadband, smart devices and monthly data packages are required to spread digital literacy to make their ends meet, the study titled "Strategic national measures to combat cybercrime", said.

Existing government infrastructure assets should be further leveraged for

provision of digital services at remote locations, it said.

The study added digital literacy needs to be increased by providing institutional trainings in schools, colleges and universities. It pitched for accelerating partnerships with global technology leaders and using the workforce trained under Skill India to impart trainings.

An integrated approach between Digital India and Skill India needs to be constructed to design programmes and impart training, it said.

# Around 950 million Indians still not on Internet: study

Rising costs, lack of digital literacy key factors; schools should provide training: Assocham

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, December 26

Though mobile data plans in India are among the cheapest in the world and the average retail price of smartphones is steadily declining, nearly 950 million Indians do not have an Internet connection, according to a joint study done by Assocham-Deloitte.

"Internet penetration is increasing in India, the access to affordable broadband, smart devices and monthly data packages is required to spread digital literacy to make their ends meet," said the study.

The study titled, 'Strategic national measures to combat cyber-crime' said: "Existing gov-

ernment infrastructure assets should be further leveraged for provision of digital services at remote locations.

"Digital literacy needs to be increased by providing institutional training in schools, colleges and universities; accelerating partnerships with global technology leaders and using the workforce trained under Skill India to impart training."

## Training programmes

It said an integrated approach between Digital India and Skill India needs to be constructed to design programmes and impart training.

Saying that the Centre should



The study said that private sector players should be incentivised to develop infrastructure, provide services and promote digital literacy increase awareness regarding the value add of technology to increase technology adoption, the study added that the benefits of technology — increase in the

standard of living of the weaker sections of society and enhancing financial inclusion should be communicated to citizens. "Private sector players should

be incentivised to develop infrastructure, provide services and promote digital literacy as part of the Digital India programme.

"Start-ups should be involved to create and customise apps to local needs to increase adoption of digital technology," added the joint study.

## Cost the major factor

It said the top barriers to adoption of technologies in the economically weaker sections of society as well as in micro small and medium enterprises (MSME) include cost and affordability.

"Most telecom operators so far have not invested significantly in development of high speed access networks in rural areas. Similarly, MSMEs also have low awareness of government and stakeholder schemes that could

The top barriers to adoption of technologies in the economically weaker sections of society as well as in micro small and medium enterprises (MSME) include cost and affordability.

lead to numerous benefits," the study said.

It said a key hindrance to the adoption of technology is the low rate of digital literacy in India.

"Several initiatives undertaken by the government and other organisations are expected to improve the digital literacy rate in the coming years, which will in turn result in an increase in adoption of technology and digital services."



## 950m Indians not connected to Net: Study

**New Delhi:** At a time when the government is aiming to convert cash economy of the country to a digital one, a study on Monday provided a reality check to this move — nearly a billion Indians do not have Internet connections.

Though mobile data plans in India are among the cheapest in the world and average retail price of smartphones is steadily declining, yet nearly 950 million people — out of a population of 1.25 billion in the country — or over three-fourths, do not have access to Internet, according to the joint study done by Assocham and Deloitte.

“Internet penetration is increasing in India, the access to affordable broadband, smart devices and monthly data packages is required to spread digital literacy to make their ends meet,” said the study. The study titled ‘Strategic national measures to combat cyber-crime’ said: “Existing government infrastructure assets should be further leveraged for provision of digital services at remote locations.

The Modi-government started emphasising on digital economy after it embarked on a demonetisation drive on November 8. IANS

