

## Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Sh. Jitin Prasada inaugurates 4th Edition of IIGF; Calls it a “Strong call to action”

Democratising AI benefits, fostering innovation, ensuring technological self-reliance and thriving startup eco system is our vision to make AI in India work for all

Nation Achieves Milestone with 95% villages linked to 3G-4G Connectivity reducing digital divide and enabling equal opportunities for all: Sh. Jitin Prasada

Women-Led Startups Thrive Across 600+ Districts in India’s Tech Ecosystem: MoS

Bharat Net project has reached most gram panchayats, bringing the promise of the digital age to rural communities: MoS

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Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), **Sh. Jitin Prasada**, inaugurated the **4th edition of the India Internet Governance Forum (IIGF)** at Bharat Mandapam. The event, a vibrant platform for dialogue and action, brought together policymakers, industry leaders, and civil society to discuss the future of Internet governance. This year’s theme, “Innovating Internet Governance for India”, highlights the nation’s commitment to leveraging the Internet for sustainable, inclusive, and equitable growth.

The inauguration ceremony was also graced by the presence of several eminent dignitaries, including Shri S Krishnan, Secretary, (MeitY), Shri Sushil Pal, Joint Secretary, MeitY, Dr. Devesh Tyagi, CEO, National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI), Shivnath Thukral, Vice President, Public Policy, Meta India, Prof. Rekha

Jain, Senior Visiting Professor, ICRIER (online participant), Ms. Amrita Choudhury, Director, CCAOI, and Mr. Dilsher Singh Malhi, Founder & CEO, Zupee.

In his inaugural address, the Minister underscored the importance of the IIGF, stating, “This forum is not just a platform for discussion but also a strong call to action.” He stressed the need for collective efforts to shape digital policies that reflect the values of equality, transparency, and sustainability, ensuring the Internet remains a force for good.

### **India’s Digital Journey**

A Model for the World, highlighting India’s rapid strides in digital transformation, Sh. Prasada spoke about landmark achievements under the Digital India initiative. He remarked, “India's transformative journey over the last decade, marked by successes like UPI, Aadhaar, and the Bharat Net project, serves as a model for other nations.” With over 1.4 billion citizens and nearly 1 billion Internet users, India has emerged as a vibrant digital economy, setting global benchmarks in innovation and inclusivity



He also emphasized how government initiatives have reduced the digital divide, bringing technology to rural communities and enabling opportunities for all. “Today, 95% of our villages are linked to 3G-4G connectivity, and our startup ecosystem has reached over 600 districts, with more than half led by women,” he added.

### **AI for India and the World**

Addressing the transformative role of artificial intelligence, the Minister outlined the government’s vision to position India as a global leader in AI. “Our vision is to make AI in India and make AI work for India as well as AI for all,” he stated. The ₹10,000 crore allocation for the India AI Mission will focus on democratizing AI benefits, fostering innovation, and ensuring technological self-reliance. With the world’s largest youth population and a thriving startup ecosystem, India is poised for an AI revolution.

### **Towards a Sustainable and Secure Digital Future**

The Minister highlighted the environmental and security challenges posed by the rapid growth of the digital economy. He emphasized India’s proactive steps to reduce the carbon footprint of its digital infrastructure, promoting renewable energy and incentivizing green innovations. Cybersecurity was also a key focus, with a call for robust infrastructure and real-time threat detection systems. The Minister stressed the importance of multi stakeholder collaboration in global Internet governance, citing India’s active role in forums like the UN’s Global Digital Compact and GPAI. He concluded by urging all stakeholders to shape a sustainable, inclusive, and secure digital future.

**Shri S Krishnan, Secretary, (MeitY)**, highlighted the transformative power of digitalization over the past two decades, emphasizing how it has revolutionized the way we access and interact with information, now all at our fingertips.

He reflected on the significant discussions from the previous edition of the **India Internet Governance Forum (IIGF)** and the actions taken since. He stressed the importance of ensuring the continued resilience of the internet, underscoring the critical steps needed to maintain its stability.



Shri Krishnan further raised an important question: “What happens if there’s a disruption? Are we stable enough to ensure that essential services can still be offered to citizens?” He called this the essence of Internet resilience and continuity.

### **Key Highlights of the Event**

The forum focused on the five important topics:

- **Empowering Connections:** Improving Internet access and bridging the digital gap for all communities.
- **Legal and Regulatory Frameworks:** Discussing balanced policies to support growth while ensuring user safety.
- **Responsible AI:** Exploring ethical and fair ways to use artificial intelligence.
- **Building a Greener and Sustainable Internet:** Sharing ideas to make digital practices environmentally friendly.
- **Trust and Safety:** Finding solutions to boost cybersecurity and build user trust online  
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