

# SHAPING THE DIGITAL FUTURE



While 5G will be driving the 4th Industrial Revolution, it will also play a vital role in transforming India

**T**wenty-five years ago, in 1995, if your home in India had internet connectivity, you would have been singled out as elite who not only had the financial entails but also the knowhow to make the most of the World Wide Web. Today, close to half a million Indians use the internet in some form or the other.

Very frankly, the impact of the internet on people, economies and countries is something that continues to astonish me. From how you connect, communicate, live, and shop to work and socialize – there isn't anything that the internet has not changed. In fact internet has been transformational in the way it has touched lives.

Today, India is one of the largest and fastest-growing internet economies in the world, second only to China, in terms of the number of internet connections and volume of apps downloaded. While 2020 marks the 25th anniversary of the internet in India, it is geared up to create substantial economic value and redefine connectivity among urban and rural populations, school-going children, and women in the coming year. According to a report, it is estimated that by 2023, there would be over 650 million internet users in the country.

## Impacting lives and livelihood

Internet connectivity can certainly inspire communities and impact every single home in towns and villages across the nation, gradually bringing next-generation digital services such as e-governance, fintech, telemedicine, and e-education. It is prudent to say that the vision of smart villages, modern agricultural interventions, cost-effective healthcare systems, and quality education will rapidly become a reality with internet connectivity.

Given this background, the Internet is no longer just a means to stay in touch with your loved ones, but a tool

for enhancing development and ensuring social impact. Having endured a paradigm shift over the decades Digital India programme has been looking to engender new growth opportunities, boost industrial productivity, and transform the socio-economic fabric of the country itself.

## Internet penetration in India

With increasing internet penetration and exponential data uptake, the government in India and the telecom sector are focused on driving digitalization and accelerating technology adoption across the country. Mobile telecom networks played an important role in increasing internet access; 3G internet service in India was launched in 2008, followed by the 4G services in 2012.

According to a report, between 2013 and 2019, there was a 68% increase in the number of wireless internet users, up from 220 million to 696 million, compared to an 18% increase in the number of wired internet users (from 18 to 22 million). The share of mobile internet users in total internet users grew from 92% to nearly 97% in this period. Like the telecom industry, the internet too has progressed from what it was 25 years ago. It will not be long before India adds its flavour and leverages the internet as an engine for socio-economic growth.

As India prepares to use smart technologies to transform cities into smart cities and take the big leap to become a superpower, 5G is expected to be a key driver for the 4th Industrial Revolution and will play a vital role in shaping our digital future. It is also being looked at as a game-changer for the enterprise. 🌟

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