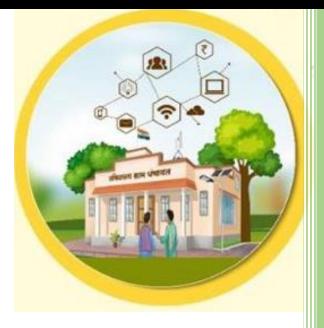# Detailed Proceedings: National Conference on 'Smart Village Panchayats: Empowering Rural Communities; Leaving No One Behind'

15th -16th September 2022, Indira Gandhi Pratishthan, Lucknow

Panchayati Raj

Detailed Proceedings of National Conference on Smart Village Panchayats held on 15th-16th September 2022, in Indira Gandhi Pratisthan, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

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In realization of the vision of Prime Minister of India 'Minimum Government, Maximum Governance', there is a need for designing and building Smart Villages which are independent in providing the service and employment at the grassroots levels. In this reference, a two-day Conference on "**Smart Village Panchayat: Empowering Rural Communities; Leaving No One Behind"** was organized in Indira Gandhi Pratishthan, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, on 15th & 16th September 2022. The minute-to-minute programme of the Conference and profile of the speakers may be seen at **Annexure I and II**, respectively.

Day 1 (15th September, 2022)

A. Inaugural Session

The inaugural session of the National Conference on Smart Village Panchayats was initiated with a warm welcome to the dignitaries including Union Cabinet Minister for Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, and Hon'ble Minister of State for Panchayati Raj, by all the participants of the Conference.

Followed by the welcome of the dignitaries, a welcome address was delivered by Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj. During his address, Secretary, MoPR, drew attention to the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions in realizing the vision of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India. Smart Villages are places where rural communities are empowered and are taking the initiative to find solutions to the challenges they face. Digitisation can be a powerful force for change – as long as it is adapted to the rural context and implemented with the involvement of rural communities themselves

Followed by welcome address of Secretary, MoPR, 2 brief presentations highlighting the role of technology in education and health were made by representatives from Byju's and MediBuddy, respectively.

During his opening remarks, Hon'ble Minister of State for Panchayati Raj, highlighted that in rural areas, the technology acts as a catalyst for development, enabling education and local business opportunities, improving health and welfare, enhancing democratic engagement and overall enhancement of rural village dwellers. "Smart Village" will provide long-term social, economic, and environmental welfare activity for village

community which will enable and empower enhanced participation in local governance processes, promote entrepreneurship and build more resilient communities. Hon'ble Minister also stressed upon the need for inculcating a change in mindset of rural citizens, which would not only create empowered rural communities, but it would also provide an impetus to the Smart Village Panchayats. Thus, all elected representatives who have attended the conference must widely disseminate the key learnings with the citizens of village.

Subsequently, Hon'ble Union Minister for Rural Development & Panchayati Raj made his address and called for proactive steps by the Elected Representatives & functionaries of Gram Panchayat towards Thus, it is critical for the State/Central Government to deliberately fuel the inner desire amongst Elected Representatives; Panchayat Functionaries, and the rural citizens, to lead their Gram Panchayats to become Smart Gram Panchayats, by adoption of sustainable technologies. It could be done by adequately establishing the benefits of eGovernance such as no corruption, increased transparency, greater convenience, revenue growth, and/ or cost reductions. There are several Gram Panchayats such as the Perinjanam Gram Panchayat, Kerala and Odanthurai Gram Panchayat, Tamil Nadu, which have successfully developed revenue models on renewable energy, which serve as examples for the Panchayati Raj Institutions of the country. Going forward, Panchayats would have a crucial responsibility of local governance at grassroots level by evolving as hub of economic activities and promote rural transformation towards achieving inclusive development, decentralized administration, good governance as well as towards achieving the SDG 2030 Agenda.

Followed by Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh delivered his inaugural address at the Conference. At the outset, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh appreciated the efforts of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in organizing the National Conference on Smart Village Panchayats. State of Uttar Pradesh has over 58,000 Gram Panchayats and thus have a huge role in rural transformation of the country. Recently, the State of UP has initiated its efforts to become a one trillion-dollar economy, and Gram Panchayats are expected to contribute to achieve this objective by bringing technology driven rural transformation. However, it is important for Gram Panchayats to become self-reliant, by promoting wide-spread adoption of technology. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) solutions, applications and services, form an integral part of smart technology solutions for all other domains like smart agriculture, smart water management, smart education, smart healthcare and so on. Uttar Pradesh is taking huge strides in the field of information and communication technology and telemedicine could help to bring specialized healthcare to the remotest corners of the country. The Gram Panchayats of Uttar Pradesh are being empowered by ensuring steps such as construction of Gram Sachivalayas, presence of Banking Correspondent Sakhi or BC Sakhi in all Gram Panchayats. Currently, the Gram Panchayats of Uttar Pradesh are being empowered to provide 233 services and are also participating in formulation of holistic GPDP, as well as payment using eGramswaraj PFMS payment interface. The inaugural session ended with vote of thanks & presentation of mementos to the dignitaries.

B. Session I- Smart Gram Panchayats & Connectivity

The session on Smart Gram Panchayats & Connectivity was moderated by **Shri Amarjeet Sinha,** Former Secretary, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj. Shri Sinha while making his opening remarks highlighted that a Smart Gram Panchayat could be classified as a Panchayat which ensures effective service delivery through technology, enables information dissemination, facilitates development of means of income and promotes a sense of fulfillment for the rural citizens. In order to promote development of Smart Gram Panchayats, it is further important that the Gram Panchayats work in close

collaboration with the Women Self Help Groups, as they have greater sensitivity to the needs of a household.

i. **Integrated Local Governance Management System (ILGMS), Kerala:** The presentation on ILGMS of Kerala was made by Sh. Vinod Kumar K., Panchayati Raj Department, Kerala. The ILGMS has been developed as a tool for empowering rural community and removing all the hurdles in service delivery by developing a responsive local governance framework. The system addresses challenges such as uncertainty and non-clarity in service delivery by building a local governance system with features such as online real time file status tracking, First In First Out, and easy access from anywhere. ILGMS provides a platform of simplified and transparent procedures ensuring ease of doing concept in practice. Thus, ILGMS ensures equal opportunity and access to the system including the most deprived.

ii. **Experience sharing by Gram Pradhan, Bharatpur Gram Panchayat, Tappal Block, Aligarh District:** Ms. Neelam, Gram Pradhan, Bharatpur Gram Panchayat and Shri Dhananjay Jaiswal, District Panchayati Raj Officer Aligarh, highlighted that the Gram Panchayat has been developed as a Smart Gram Panchayat with interventions such as development of Gram Sachivalaya, eCommerce facilities enabled through Hi speed WIFI enabled computers, installation of CCTVs and Public address systems, development of Panchayat library, development of child friendly hand wash system and child friendly toilets etc. Solid and liquid waste management and rainwater harvesting system has been installed in this village. Wet and dry waste is collected and disposed of separately. Organic manure is also prepared outside the village. RRC sheds have been built. The pits have been dug for the preparation of organic manure by vermi compost pit i.e., earthworm. Filter chambers are designed to collect the silt. Toilets are being constructed for the families left out in the survey. Paintings related to cleanliness are being made on religious places, schools, panchayat buildings, Anganwadi centers, health centers, squares and walls. It is important to note that the interventions in this Gram Panchayats have inspired other Gram Panchayats in the Aligarh District and other Gram Panchayats have replicated several of these initiatives.

iii. **Experience sharing by Chief Development Officer, Zilla Parishad - Meerut:** Shri Shashank Chaudhary, Chief Development Officer, Zilla Parishad, Meerut highlighted that in Meerut District, more than 350 Gram Panchayats have public libraries which have created in the empty meeting halls of the Panchayat Bhawans. These libraires could be accessed by paying nominal fees, which ensures serious patrons to the library and contributes to the own source of revenue of the Panchayats. Under the Adharshila programme, Knowledge centers have been developed in the schools, where working models which expound scientific concepts, have been placed. This initiative aims to develop curiosity and scientific temper amongst the children in rural areas of the country.

iv. **Digital Libraries initiative, Karnataka by Dr. Shobha Ananda Reddy, OSD, Indian Administrative Fellowship, RD & PR Department, Karnataka :** Representatives from State of Karnataka, made a brief presentation on initiative of Karnataka to revitalize the rural public libraires. In 2019, over 5000 rural public libraries were transferred to the RD & PR Department, to provide local oversight in monitoring these local libraries. The initiative has been owned by all, and increasingly, librarians have been using their social media to promote awareness about their libraries. Rural libraries were taken up for revival in phases. Many GPs were given new spaces, and some got new buildings. Most libraries received electrical connections, book racks, furniture, reading rooms or balconies, study desks for students, armchairs, and garden benches for seniors. Attractive mural paintings were done on the walls of library buildings. The digital library of Department of Libraries, Karnataka maintains a whopping 2,50,11,312 registered members and 21,80,638 e-content. The department's decision to go digital materialised with the opening of first digital library in February 2020. Within a period of two years, as many as 372 public libraries were transformed into digital libraries in a phased manner under Karnataka. The digital library which had about 92 lakh members and 20 lakh e-books in 2021 has been expanding by leaps and bounds. Sikshana Foundation has collaborated with RDPR Department and launched "Grama Digi Vikasana" under its "Digital Inclusion Program", which covers 1200 Gram Panchayats of the state. Gram Panchayat Libraries are equipped with four Android Mobile Devices, One Android TV and Internet Connection/Wi-Fi hotspot, annual data plan.

v. **Initiative of Sampark Foundation:** A brief presentation on initiatives of Sampark Foundation towards improving learning outcomes of Children was made by Shri Vineet Nayar, Founder of Sampark Foundation. Innovation in rural schooling system would play a crucial role in improving these learning outcomes, by adoption of digital technologies. The Sampark Foundation has developed several innovative solutions such as Foundational Literacy and Numeracy kit, puzzle board, chatbots, gamified assessments and so on. Thus, Sampark Foundation is promoting immersive learning which has had a great impact on the learning outcomes of the rural children. Sampark

Foundation has also developed Sampark TV setup, which transforms a standard TV into a Smart TV which is preloaded with learning modules. Sampark foundation is actively working in 8 States in over 1,00,000 schools and is committed to empower the schools with digital technologies, free of cost, to improve the learning outcomes of children.

vi. **Smart Panchayats initiative – Uttar Pradesh:** Shri Manoj Kumar Singh, Additional Chief Secretary, Panchayati Raj Department, Uttar Pradesh made a brief presentation highlighting the efforts of Uttar Pradesh Panchayati Raj Department in which 4 major aspects have been focused including development of self-sufficient infrastructure in GPs; Effective Service Delivery & Income Generation; Transparent Panchayat Functioning and High-Speed Internet – Free Wi-Fi Access. In a unique attempt to empower the women in rural areas, Banking Correspondent Sakhi (B C Sakhi) have been made functional, who have facilitated transactions worth 2200 crores. The State of Uttar Pradesh has taken a new initiative towards bringing innovative approach to meet the ICT needs at the Gram Panchayat level, by recruiting local educated youth as 'Gram Sahayaks', who would not only act as Village Level Entrepreneurs to promote value creation in farm and non farm areas, but they would also facilitate digital service delivery at the Gram Panchayat level. The In addition, the State has envisaged to provide free WIFI access to citizens of every GP in the radius of 50 m of Sachivalaya. Going forward, the State would also lay emphasis on strengthening of service delivery at Panchayat Sachivalayas including efficient telemedicine & edtech services.

vii. **Digi Gaon initiative of CSC SPV:** Shri Rishikesh Patankar, Chief Operations Officer, CSC SPV, made a presentation on Digi Gaon initiative of CSC towards Smart Panchayats. While making his presentation, Shri Patankar, highlighted other initiatives which are being implemented by CSCs such as Pradhan Mantri Digital Saksharta Abhiyan of MeITY, Tele Law initiative of Ministry of Law & Justice and Culture survey of Ministry of Culture. The Digi gaon initiative of MeITY aims to connect digitally and deliver benefits/services to reduce "digital divide" by ensuring appropriate framework for comprehensive development. The Project would be implemented in 700 villages across the country, one village per district per state/UT, by March 2023. The deliverables could be classified under Education, health, skill, and Infrastructure & Services, which include several services such as telemedicine, Competitive exam training, installation of solar street lights etc., Around 5000+ villages are covered under Digital Village scheme through CSR support from various organization like HDFC Bank, HDFC ERGO, PayPal, HP, NEC, UCO Bank. A total number of ~10 Million beneficiaries covered under Digital Village scheme & CSR efforts. The Digi gaon initiative has enabled people to understand the use of basic computers knowledge, advanced computers skill, basics of Accounts and also provided basic preventive health consultation through teleconferencing. The initiative has also improved rate of adoption and receptiveness for financial services like Banking, Insurance, Digital Payments, Pension etc. creating a financially inclusive society

viii. **Enhancing Digital Network Coverage for Rural Areas by Shri Vikram Tewatia, DDG, COAI:** At the outset Shri Vikram Tewatia gave a brief overview of the current state of rural ICT connectivity and network. Shri Tewatia then laid the broad contours of a smart village as a holistic and inclusive approach for rural digital transformation towards achieving the SDGs in remote and underserved communities where rural dwellers have access to network infrastructure via connected devices and citizens can access impactful and transformational SDG-related digital services, as they need them, on time, anywhere and all the time. Shri Tewathia also emphasized on need for mobile towers for ensuring reliable rural connectivity, as around 25 Lakh mobile towers would be required in the next few years. In order to achieve these targets, tools such as Tarag Sanchar could play a key role at the Gram Panchayat level. Going forward,

State Authorities to adopt and enforce the Gazette RoW Rules 2016. Gram Panchayat land and buildings should also be made available for installation of Mobile towers.

ix. **Financing development of Smart Village Panchayats:** Shri S K Dora, Chief General Manager, NABARD, made a presentation on the role of NABARD in financing development of Smart Village Panchayats. During the presentation, it was highlighted that NABARD's initiatives are aimed at building an empowered and financially inclusive rural India through specific goal oriented strategies towards touching almost every aspect of rural economy. NABARD through it's Financial and Grant Support can play a major role towards the development of Smart Village Panchayats. Panchayati Raj Institutions are eligible to avail support from NABARD. NABARD also offers support under RIDF for soil conservation & flood protection, Watershed Development/ Reclamation of waterlogged areas; drainage; forest development; Solar Panels etc. NABARD could offer grant support for Smart industrialization by providing Assistance towards Marketing Initiatives of NABARD (Rural Haat, Rural Mart and Exhibitions Initiatives to promote Skill Development and Entrepreneurship among rural youth-Grant Support. Going forward, NABARD would facilitate the Panchayati Raj institutions in promoting sustainable and equitable agriculture and rural development through participative financial and non-financial interventions, innovations, technology and institutional development for securing prosperity

x. **Transparency in public procurement for rural areas by Shri K C Jha, Advisor, GeM:** During his presentation, Shri K C Jha, Advisor, GeM highlighted that **GeM** is a short form of one stop **Government e-Market Place** where common user goods and services can be procured. GeM is dynamic, self-sustaining and user-friendly portal for making procurement by Government officers. GeM is a completely paperless, cashless and system driven e-market place that enables procurement of common use goods and services with minimal human interface. GeM eliminates human interface in vendor registration, order placement and payment processing, to a great extent. Being an open platform, GeM offers no entry barriers to bonafide suppliers who wish to do business with the Government. Recently, GeM has been integrated with the eGramswaraj PFMS payment interface, of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, which further promotes transparency of public procurement at the Grassroots level. A pilot project in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, is in its final stages of completion, which was conducted followed by the successful pilot in Gurugram Haryana. This endeavor would serve a classic example of eGovernance at the Panchayat level as it ensures, ease of use for Panchayats in order booking; transparency in procurement by Panchayats under XV FC grants and it also encourages local vendors (Proprietors, Self Help groups, co-operatives etc.) to register on GeM.

xi. **Role of Smart Connectivity in Smart Village Panchayats by Shri Atul Sharma, Principal General Manager, Bharat Broadband Network Limited**: At the outset Shri

Atul Sharma Principal General Manager, indicated that BharatNet, is World's largest Rural Internet Project of National importance, which aims to build a Highly Scalable Network Infrastructure accessible on a Non-Discriminatory basis to provide Affordable Broadband connectivity to rural masses & institutions for realising the vision of Digital India. Smart Connectivity is one of the most significant elements of Smart Village Panchayats. The Bharatnet Project would promote E-Governance Services such as Land Records, Birth/Death Certificates, Aadhar-Based Services, NREGA at the grassroots level. It would also facilitate large effective Panchayat management: - Gram Sabha meetings, updation of village records, citizen database and effective performance monitoring of Panchayats. Community Participation: - Intra-village, inter-district sharing of practices and resources. Communication with block and district etc.

xii. **Internet connectivity for efficient rural governance and economic growth, by Shri Pranay Pathak, Reliance Jio**: Shri Pranay Pathank, Reliance Jio, highlighted that Reliance Jio has been a pioneer in telecom and connectivity in the entire country. Generally, high speed internet in provided either through fiber connectivity or through high speed UBR link. Currently, WIFI can be extended to school, Post office, Community centre, health centre, Angan wadi Kendra, Government Ration Kendra, Police station, Home etc. in village/GP by connecting GP/Village. Jio has rolled out intracity OFC network in 132 major population centres in UP and FTTH Network is under implementation out in all DHQ/Tehsils. In Uttar Pradesh, 99.3% Villages are covered by Jio RF coverage and 99.7% of Villages are within 5Km from MW. This enables covering entire villages on WIFI connectivity using high speed UBR connectivity. Going forward, different smart rural solutions which include, Smart Street lighting, Smart Genset Monitoring system, Smart Fleet Management, Smart Electricity Metering systems and Smart Connected Coolers.

xiii. **Technology Alternatives for Rural Connectivity by Dr. Krishna Sirohi, Prof. of Practice, IIT Delhi:** During his presentation, Prof. Krishna Sirohi, IIT Delhi, indicated that there is a need to critically assess the entire ICT & network ecosystem of the country and establish plans to evolve dedicated solutions for rural connectivity. In addition, it is also important focus on high end research in agriculture to improve farm productivity enhancement, farmer's income and establish technology solutions for creating trust in food production and supply. Currently, Smart Village Connectivity is dependent on Public Telecom Network and Telecom service provider infrastructure which are economically unsustainable in Rural Area resulting in high cost of operation and poor quality of service. Thus, there is an immediate need to explore alternate connectivity deployment options to supplement the telecom service provider efforts in Rural Area and for development of sustainable connectivity Infrastructure. Thus, provisions to allow each village to have its own 5g private network need to explored and spectrum allocation to gram panchayats for setting up their own network also need to be reflected upon.

Shri Amarjeet Sinha while summarizing the session emphasized community participation and proactive effort on part of Gram Panchayats, State & District Panchayati Raj officials, NGOs and Industries to initiate projects to empower the Gram Panchayats by adoption of digital technologies. The interventions and best practices discussed during the session not only serve as models for replication but also provide an opportunity for collaboration and exchange of knowledge amongst Gram Panchayats. Shri Sinha also observed that in the next year, all Gram Panchayats must make commit to bring elements of Smart Panchayats discussed here, in their own Gram Panchayats.

C. Session II- Skilled ICT Manpower

The session was moderated by **Shri Madan Padaki, CEO & Founder, 1Bridge**. Shri. Padaki opened the session by emphasizing on youth and entrepreneurship, their contribution to economic development and how to create job opportunities in the third tier of governance.

i. **Initiatives of Unnat Bharat Abhiyan by Ms. Divya Khattar, Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA)**: Ms. Divya Khatter indicated that the UBA was launched in 2014 as a GoI flagship programme under the Ministry of Education. It is a unique program that

focuses on promoting higher education in rural India, subsequently contributing on development of villages and is coordinated by Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi. One of the major initiatives of UBA includes establishment of a cross learning platform between higher education institutes and villages. In addition, students and faculty members of higher education institutes connect with village residences to form a mechanism of calibrating education system for a Panchayat. Throughout the process, the academic institutes collaborate with NGOs, SHGs to form a plan of implementing education. UBA has more than 3000 institutions linked with the program who are working with D/o Jal Shakti, D/o Rural Development etc. The program aims to connect 2.5 Lakh Gram Panchayats with close to 55,000 educational institutions in order to strengthen the education system. An MoU has also been signed between Unnat Bharat Abhiyan and Ministry of Panchayati Raj to achieve the SDG goal.

ii. **Upskilling rural India by Shri Vamsi Udaigiri, CEO, Hesa Global**: Shri Vamsi Udaygiri state that Hesa Global is a B2B digital platform backed by the strength and power of a large ground force called the Hesaathis, this powerful combination allows businesses the means to access and integrate into the rural market. Training of youth, making them self-reliant is the aim of HESA Global and a 'SuperApp' for villages has been created, which is being used by women self-help groups, and youth by creating livelihood for themselves.

iii. **Upskilling rural India by Shri Sourjyendu Medda, CEO, Dealshare**: Shri Sourjyendu Medda, CEO Dealshare highlighted that Dealshare is an e-commerce platform for rural India with a presence in eight States (including Uttar Pradesh). It primarily works towards strengthening rural economy by developing local e-commerce platform where local manufacturers can showcase/sell their products. eCommerce solves the biggest problem of pricing, supply chain. Dealshare adopted a Private Public Partnership (PPP) model for its interventions. Dealshare has its direct network of supply chain, which optimizes costs. Another factor is upskilling rural youth in efficiently utilizing the infrastructure created by Central/State Governments. With increased internet connectivity, Panchayats will have access to outside marketplace.

iv. **SimbaQuartz- Tangra Business Model of Rural Entrepreneurship by Ms. Mandeep Kaur**: Ms. Mandeep Tangra stated that SimbaQuartz which is a digital marketing company, spoke about their approach and initiatives to strengthen rural economy. SimbaQuartz focuses on creating manpower in the field of software engineering and graphical engineering. They promote reverse migration from urban to rural to train rural youths. Their interventions include buying milk from local houses instead of packaged and branded milk to strengthen village economy and ensure self-sufficiency. Paying-guest concept was introduced by them in Tangra for income generation among women. In some schools, shoes were distributed among children by the company. The speaker also highlighted few challenges they faced while

working like non-existence of a structured policy for rural upliftment, internet services are still very expensive and poor network at village level.

To conclude the session, **Sh. Madan Padaki** summarized by importance of aspirational youth, building their confidence. He also showcased a case-study of Mr. Ramesh from Kotagudda Panchayat of Karnataka, wherein a drastic transformation was showcased of a non-english speaking youth to being affluent in English. Mr. Ramesh went ahead to win CNN-IBN Real Heroes Award as he went on to become a public speaker. Similar transformation has been seen across 25,000 youth of villages. He emphasized on creating entrepreneurs in every village by citing some exemplary examples.

D. Session III- Smart Energy

The session was moderated by **Shri Ashok Srivastava, Sr. Project Officer, Uttar Pradesh New & Renewable Energy Development Agency**. While making his opening remarks, Shri. Srivastava emphasized on the need for decentralized energy solutions at the grassroots level and proactive efforts of Gram Panchayats.

i. **Challenges in adopting renewable energy in rural areas by Ms. Pavitra Sinha, Shakti Foundation:** Ms. Pavitra Sinha, Shakti Foundation highlighted the challenges in adopting Renewable Energy in Rural Areas. Shakti Foundation works to facilitate India's transition to a cleaner energy future by aiding the design and implementation of policies. It aims to provide Clean Power, Clean Energy Financing, Energy Efficiency, and Sustainable Transport and in the cross-cutting space of climate activities, the foundation also has engagements and MoUs with MNRE, NITI AAYOG, MoEFCC, NHSRC, GoTN, GoB, etc. Shakti Foundation has worked on

strengthening the last mile delivery of power in India across various geographies to enhance Income opportunities, reduce drudgery, and bridge the urban-rural divide for underserved communities through Distributed Renewable Energy (DRE). It was also informed that there are five focal areas to promote DRE, namely, Agriculture, Education, Healthcare, Roof-top solar, and Finance. In the current scenario, Under Saubhagya Scheme, ~100% Rural electrification has been achieved and Transmission lines have been laid out. There is still a challenge of electricity intermittency exists. It was suggested that DRE can help in resolving the issues as DRE stands for when electricity is generated from sources, often renewable energy sources, near the point of use instead of centralized generation sources from power plants. DRE is also competitive with Grid Electricity example Cold Storage. DREs basically offer Cost Effective tariffs, Energy Security, and Powering livelihoods. For the implementation of the DRE system, there are many challenges as multiple beneficiaries/stakeholders exist. There are mainly 4 beneficiaries namely, Developers, Consumers, Implementing Agencies, and Financiers. It was also informed that Distributed Renewable Energy (DRE) has the potential to resolve energy access challenges in rural and underserved areas.

ii. **Initiatives of Government for rural areas by Shri J K Jethani, Scientist, MNRE:** Shri J K Jethani stressed upon the importance of villages for making renewable energy, as envisioned by the Hon'ble Prime Minister to generate 500 GW of renewable energy by the year 2020-30 and we currently stand by 160 GW. In order to make Gram Panchayats smart, villages must identify the appliances that can be used with renewable energy. Shri Jethani also informed about the concept of Hariyali Gram developed by AREAS, NRDC, and SEWA to provide energy security for rural communities, scale up off-grid clean energy solutions, and enhance education and livelihood opportunities. The smart energy solutions can be extensive use of LED bulbs, Solar lamps, use of Cool roofs, advanced use of solar pumps, and community-level interventions. MNRE has taken initiatives for rural areas by providing support for the solarization of agriculture pumps for 35 lakh farmers under PM-KUSUM, Support for installation of solar power plants up to 2 MW capacity on farmer's/ Panchayat's land, Decentralized Renewable Energy (DRE) Livelihood Applications, etc. Speaker informed about the components of the PM Kusum scheme wherein Component A, in a barren land solar plant can be installed and energy generated by the plant can further to sold to distribution companies. In Component B, diesel pumps can be replaced by solar pumps and in Component C, where the pump is already working with electricity can be replaced with renewable energy. It was also highlighted by the speaker that in villages where rooftop does not have the capacity to install Solar Panels, the concept of Virtual Net Metering can be used wherein the electricity produced from the Solar plant is allocated to multiple customers' bills. Apart from the above-highlighted sources of energy there are other renewable energy sources that

exist i.e., Mini, Micro, and Small Hydel Plants in hilly regions can provide electrical/mechanical power, Biomass gasifiers in major agriculture states can provide reliable electricity supply, and other sources.

iii. **Experience sharing by Odanthurai Gram Panchayat, Tamil Nadu by Representative from Odanthurai Gram Panchayat, Tamil Nadu:** The Sarpanch of the Odanthurai GP informed that the Panchayat lies in the hilly region with a tribal population and is engaged mostly in agricultural activities. The own source of revenue for the panchayat is energy generated from Windmills. The value is Rs. 1.55 cr. In the FY 2021-22 this windmill produced 4.60 Lacs of in electrical energy. Central level schemes are being implemented in the Gram Panchayat. It was highlighted that Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) scheme has provided safe drinking water to the Panchayat and by implementing other schemes, electricity and quality roads have also been provided in the Gram Panchayat.

iv. **Low Cost and commercially feasible energy solutions by Shri Shirish Garud, Renewable Energy Technologies, TERI:** Shri Shirish Garud informed that The Energy and Resources Institute, TERI was established in the year 1974 and has been working in rural areas since then. In the rural areas activities, the organization is working with Government agencies like GIVICA, Bihar, and other Governments and also working with other corporate groups like IKEA, Vodafone, etc. TERI has introduced various interventions like Solar based Deep freezers for use in healthcare, Solar Plant and streetlights, clean water facility at institutions like water ATMs, Solar Micro irrigation Pump sets, and IDES-Integrated Domestic Energy System that provides clean cooking and lighting solutions to address the other major concern of indoor air pollution. Shri Garud urged the Panchayati Raj Institutions for integrating of these approaches at a village level.

Shri Ashok Srivastava, Sr. Project Officer, Uttar Pradesh New & Renewable Energy Development Agency, while summarizing highlighted that Renewable energy offers an opportunity to improve the social, economic, environmental and health indicators of rural population. Distributed Renewable Energy (DRE) solutions such as Off-Grid Solar Photo Voltaic (SPV) Systems, Solar Lanterns, Solar Study Lamps, Solar Micro and Mini-grid, Wind Energy etc., would be a key enabler and in addressing the energy needs of the rural population.

Day I Conclusion- Remarks by Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj

Sh. Sunil Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj apprised the participants on the importance of creating Smart Panchayats that are self-reliant and independent, in order to prevent the undue migration of young adults from rural India to cities in search of better working opportunities. Sh. Kumar also mentioned that broadband infrastructure, digitisation (promoting digital service delivery) and educated manpower at village level, lays the foundation of development.

Examples of State level initiatives such as Village Level Entrepreneurs in U.P. and Maharashtra, Smart Village – Smart Ward towards Smart Andhra Pradesh, Electricity generation of Odanthurai Panchayat in Coimbatore, and CCTV and bio-metric machines installation, air-conditioned classrooms, wi-fi coverage in Punsari Panchayat of Gujarat were cited during the address. To make the rural development efficacious it is necessary to devise a strategy/model for executing and monitoring the process. A specially designed suitable framework based on Cluster approach, Public Private Partnership (PPP) along with Citizen participation on the grounds of Science, Technology, Engineering, Regulations and Management will play important role to build next generation smart villages. Rural policies should build on the identity and dynamism of rural areas through the implementation of integrated strategies and multi-sectorial approaches. They should promote diversification and foster entrepreneurship, investment, innovation and employment. These policies should also give value to rural identity and enhance sustainability, social inclusion and local development, as well as the resilience of rural communities.

Day 2 (16th September, 2022)

E. Session IV- Smart Agriculture & Smart Environment

The session was moderated by Sh. Aloke Agarwal, Partner, Deloitte. While making his opening remarks, Shri Agarwal noted that Digital technology can empower farmers to collect information in the field and it is expected to allow them to monitor each plot of land in future to determine precisely what crop they need to produce to thrive, with reduced usage of resources for cultivation.

Transformative Drone technology in agriculture by Sh. Abhay Pareek, Lead Fourth Industrial Revolution for Agriculture, World Economic Forum: Sh. Abhay Pareek, spoke about the Emerging technologies like AI, IOT, blockchain, Drones are transforming the world around us including agriculture sector. These technologies can create efficiency in production with optimal usage of resources and open new markets for farmers. It was also indicated that communities in smart village panchayat will aim to transform agriculture practices to enhance resilience and build on local strength with focus on increasing productivity and income for farmers at the same time optimizing resource utilization. Shri Pareek indicated GDP can be increased by around 4 lakh crores with the intervention of various technologies and the farmers become aware with the latest trends to optimize the farming procedure for maximum output. Drone for farming can reduce the input cost by 25% and it can save the health of farmers by up to 90%. With Technology interventions, farmers can increase the access to credit to adopt precision and climate smart agriculture practices, insurance and social security to enhance resilience to shock; increase efficiency in agriculture production through advisory, access to required input and suggested package of practices for efficient use of inputs and enhance smallholder and FPO's access to markets with minimal intermediation to fetch optimal returns for the produce. This will create and effective self-sustainable ecosystem that helps build capacity and livelihood opportunity of local resources. Shri Pareek also highlighted the work done by WEF including State level pilot Programme conducted in Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and Maharashtra.

i. **Crop Residue Management by Sh. Debashish Biswas, Partner, Deloitte:** Shri Debashish Biswas discussed different alternatives to stubble burning and role of technology in agri waste management. Setting the context of the presentation, Shri Biswas highlighted that more than 7000 fire incidents have been recorded in Haryana

only for the year 2021. Further he said, Greenhouse gas emits due to the burning of crops and the loss of nutrients impacts the soil fertility. As per the records, 1.6 MT stubble burnt in Haryana which lowers farm incomes and farm incomes and farm yield. Shri Biswas also informed that an Individual survey was conducted for 1500 farmers across Nissing and Karnal block using an app-interface. Various meetings/ interaction conducted with various stakeholders including professors at State University, Agriculture officers, CHC, KVK, start-ups. He also presented the proposed intervention. The three-pronged approach was discussed to tackle the stubble burning. A stubble Management Plan was presented to build an ecosystem of crop residue management solutions that incentivize farmers and limit stubble burning.

ii. **Smart Agriculture Opportunities by Sh. Arjun Venkatraman, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation:** At the outset, Shri Arjun Venkaraman highlighted the objective of Bill & Melinda Gates foundation and explained the Inclusive Agricultural Transformation (IAT) with the help of 5 stages of transformation. Further, IAT is productivity- led growth in the smallholder sector that spurs rural sector economic growth and delivers broad and accelerated impacts favoring the poor, especially the women. The five stages of IAT include Subsistence Agriculture; Getting Agriculture moving; Agriculture as a contributor to growth; Integrating agriculture into the macro-economy and Agriculture in industrial economies. Shri Venkataraman also indicated that the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation focuses on four strategic goals that ensure the transformation is inclusive, namely, increase agricultural productivity for SHFs, Increase SHF households' income; Increase equitable consumption of a safe, affordable, nutritious diet year- round and Increase women's empowerment in agriculture. The work is made possible by a large group of grantees in diverse organization from government, academia, civil society, private sectors. Shri Venkatraman also briefed about the work done by the Foundation in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh.

iii. **Impact of One District One Product Scheme on rural economy of India by Sh. Minhaj Alam, Additional Secretary, ODOP:** Sh. Minhaj Alam, Additional Secretary, MoFPI, made a brief presentation on " Impact of One District One Product Scheme on rural economy of India. Shri Alam apprised that ODOP was first formulated in Uttar

Pradesh and since then it has been adopted by various Central Ministries like Agriculture, Commerce, Food Processing and Textile. The PM Formalization of Micro food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme was launched on 20ᵗʰ May 2020 with an outlay of Rs. 10,000 Cr to be implement over a period of 2020-21 to 2024-25. Scheme envisaged credit linked grant to 2 lakh micro food processing units. Then key features of the schemes were also discussed. Shri Alam highlighted that the scheme adopts One District One Product (ODOP) approach to reap the benefits of scale in terms of procurement of inputs, availing common services and marketing of products. The four underlying steps adopted to achieve this goal include, Support to individual & Group Units; Training and capacity Building; Marketing and Branding and Support for Formalization. Shri Alam also apprised that ODOP has been approved for 713 districts of 25 States/ UTs with 137 unique products into 16 Product categories identified as ODOP. Then he highlighted the key features of the ODOP scheme. Further, ODOP aims to achieve economic development, increase in investment, export promotion and employment generation of the area along with the social motive of skilling, re-skilling of workforce, eliminating regional imbalances and offering improved standard of living to all. It has immense benefit for economic revitalization and inclusive development of those States/ UTs facing problem of income inequality, increasing pressure of rural-urban migration, fading local skills and crafts and lack of employment opportunities.

iv. **Rural Bazaar by Dr. Ketaki Bapat, O/o Principal Scientific Advisor to Government of India:** Dr. Ketaki Bapat gave a brief presentation on rural technology solutions developed by Rural Technology Action group (RuTAG). Dr. Bapat informed that O/o PSA, in 2003, conceptualized the Rural Technology Action Group (RuTAG) programme that could provide a mechanism for application of S&T in rural areas with needed synergy. RuTAG is a synergizing and catalyzing mechanism aimed to Address different occupational groups, Reduce the drudgery Add value to their products & services. It was developed with the help of seven IIT. RuTAG centres are demand-driven, interventions for rural areas are helping to bridge technology gaps, imparts training and technical hand holding. RuTAG is a synergizing and catalyzing mechanism which aims to address different occupational groups, Reduce the drudgery & add value to their products & service; Bridging technology gaps with innovative approach and provide training and technical handholding. Dr. Bapat then showcased the e-Vending Cart initiative of O/o PSA in collaboration with Ministry of Panchayati Raj, and Department of Science and Technology including models of Subjee Cooler, vending cart Accessories, Thela Samrat, Smart Vending Cart, Air cooled based Vegetable vending cart etc.

v. **Opportunities in Rural e-commerce by Sh. Shireesh Joshi, Chief Business Officer, ONDC:** Shri Shirish Joshi made brief presentation on Opportunities in Rural e-commerce and the efforts of ONDC to improve the rural e-commerce. Shri Joshi indicated that the goal of ONDC is to dramatically step change eCommerce penetration – population scale inclusion. Shri Joshi also informed that the ONDC has been designed to solve key factors across the value chain holding back participation and discussthe key issues in rural e-commerce such as Limited Choices for sellers to be online, Inability for retailers and merchants to set their own terms and conditions etc. Further, he explained, the benefits of ONDC platform to interlink the e-commerce platform. Shri Joshi also referred to ONDC as the UPI of e-commerce in which different e-commerce websites can be interlinked together for e-commerce activity by the customers. It was informed that the design of ONDC revolves around 2 interrelated principles which included unbundling of customer & seller acquisition to reduce Go-to-market efforts and interoperability between platforms/ applications for greater market access.

vi. **e-Choupal model- Leveraging Information Technology in Indian agribusiness sector by Sh. Kumar Pranesh, Regional Head, ITC:** At the outset, Shri Kumar Pranesh apprised the audience that e-Choupal model is having presence in 22 States and UTs, 220 districts with 160+ locations and 6000+ e-choupal and Sanchalaks. So far, more than 4 million farmers have been onboarded and more than 3 lakh acres of farming land is covered under crop development programmes. He also described the basic operations of e-choupals. Shri Pranesh then highlighted various services provided under e-choupal like Choupal Sagar, Fuel Station, Choupal Haat etc. and presented the various features of ITC Mars App for farmers to get various services through mobiles. Shri Pranesh also apprised about the seamless experience of ITC Mars for availing a variety of credit options for the need of farmers and its evolution as a one stop solution for farmers. In conclusion, Shri Pranesh proposed solutions to address the challenges involved in agri-business ecosystem which include, leveraging economies of scale and market linked crop production in group; Collective sourcing of agri-inputs; Potential for enhancing formal credit linkages; Increased market access with cost efficiencies due to collectivization; Demand aggregation and fulfilment – economy of scale at last mile.

vii. **Environmental best practices for rural areas by Ms. Manisha Choudhari, National Coordinator, United Nation for Environment Programme:** Ms. Manisha Choudhari briefed about Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction (Eco-DRR) and said degradation of ecosystems – such as forests, wetlands, coastal and marine systems, and drylands – is a major driver of disaster risk and a key component of vulnerability to disasters. Further to this, Eco-DRR measures are identified as cost-effective and sustainable measures, both structural and non-structural crucial for reducing the impact of various hazards including landslides, flooding, drought, coastal hazards and forest fires on the ground and especially on vulnerable populations. Furthermore, a case study on Anjuthengu Gram Panchayat was also presented which included steps pertaining to Coastal afforestation work using Mangroves and other species; Mahatma Gandhi NREGS funds used by the local body and the impact of these steps such as more stable coast and reduced erosion. Ms. Choudhari also highlighted that over the past 100 years, more than 90 per cent of crop varieties have disappeared and today, just nine plant species account for 66 per cent of total crop production – contributing to ubiquitous health risks like diabetes, obesity and malnutrition. In addition, the textile sector accounts for about 8 per cent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. Textile dyeing is also the second largest polluter of water globally. Ms. Choudhari also discussed about the commitments at National and Global level such as India's Climate Commitments – Panchamrit; LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment); Ban on Single-Use Plastics; Restoration of 26 million ha land; Biodiversity conservation and Targets for SDGs.

viii. **Meenangadi Panchayat, Kerala- towards Carbon Neutrality by Sh. K E Vinayan, President, Meenangadi Gram Panchayat:** The President of Gram Panchayat highlighted the efforts made by them to make their Panchayat a Carbon Neutral Panchayat. The various initiatives were taken to make the Panchayat as first carbon neutral panchayat of the country. The President of Odanthurai GP also apprised that more than 1.5 lakh trees were planted under the tree banking scheme by adopting the Tree mortgage scheme. The project was launched 6 years ago and it will take 3 more years to complete the project of Carbon Neutral Meenangadi. The concept of 'Carbon

Neutrality' puts forth the notions of Zero-carbon development, nature conservation, food-energy self-sufficiency and economic development. As human activities are the core cause of current climate crisis, mitigating our Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and adapting to the rising extreme weather events is critical. Zero-carbon development which promotes sustainable living is the effective solution to reduce anthropogenic emissions as well as to improve our resilience. Further, the emission and sequestration analysis were done based on the IPCC Guidelines for National GHG Inventories (2006) using primary as well as secondary data from the panchayat. UNEP's Low Carbon Mobility Toolkit was used for emission estimation in Transport sector.

F. Session V- Smart Health

The 2nd session on Day 2 of the Smart Village Panchayat Conference was on the theme of Smart Health. This session was moderated by Shri (Dr.) Indu Bhushan, Ex-CEO, National Health Authority. Setting the tone of the session, Shri (Dr.) Bhushan addressed the audience with an emphasis on divide between Rural and Urban India. Shri (Dr.) Bhushan presented key data points to highlight that Rural India lagged behind its urban counterpart in areas such as Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Stenting, distance to health facility, availability of health provider and knowledge amongst women about HIV/AIDS. However, it was commendable that Rural areas were performing better than Urban areas in vaccination. Shri (Dr.) Bhushan shared his thoughts on areas where the digital and communication technology can help the rural areas such as accelerating access to new technologies and treatments; improving availability of medical care services; more effective implementation of the existing health program; strengthening of the continuum of care and better coordination of the functioning of different departments

i. **Rural Health preparedness and infrastructure development by Shri Shyamal Santra, Transforming Rural India (TRI) Foundation**: Shri Santra shared his insights on Reimagining the Future of Healthcare in Rural India. The key factors which are significant contributors in delay of health service delivery in the rural India include Socioeconomic and cultural characteristics, which leads to delay in decision of

seeking care; Accessibility of health care, which leads to delay in decision of seeking care, along with delay in identification and availability of health facility and Quality of care, which leads to delay in decision of seeking care, along with delay in receipt of adequate and appropriate treatment.In the first 1,000 days of life of an infant, there are nine areas which should be emphasized upon to improve the condition of healthcare in rural areas. There is also need for leveraging the social capital of communities and DAY-NRLM promoted SHG-VO-CLF platform for demand generation, access to entitlements and support for system strengthening. The strengthening of the village health sanitation and nutrition Committee with services and community feedback mechanism, along with exploring innovative way of service delivery involving health startups is also necessary. Moreover, digital health care, telemedicine, and integrated healthcare network with referral facilities would be required and support in filling the health workforce gaps, rationalization of workforce allocation in districts, and capacity building would also be required. TRI has been targeting multiple schemes and initiatives of the Government at various following stages, such as: Home delivery of contraceptives, Enhanced compensation scheme; Facility and Home-Based Newborn Care, HBYC, Immunization, Promotion of Breast Feeding; Immunization and nutrition. Recent pandemic scenario has opened up a new dimension of collaborative health management, with communities observing citizen participation in adopting life-saving behaviors. PRIs, SHGs and Health Systems convergence is characterized by the large-scale mobilization of women collectives under NRLM; social capital generated through women participation in CBOs and potential solution to address public health issues directly related to behaviors, norms and habits.

ii. **Citizen Centric Healthcare leveraging IT & associated technologies by Shri Amit Singh, Executive Director, Deloitte**: At the outset, Shri Amit Singh, highlighted the key challenges being faced by Rural healthcare ecosystem are inadequate infrastructure, shortfall of medical staff, lack of quality of healthcare and accessibility to healthcare facilities. In this regard, a three tier Smart Health ecosystem can be leveraged to improve the healthcare scenario in rural India. In the Smart Health ecosystem, Tier 1 - Smart Care would include Provider led maintenance and improvement of illness, disease and injury through the provision of health services; Tier 2 – Virtual Care would include Crossover between self-managed and provider-led care and Tier 3 – Smart Health Communities would include an entity that operates largely outside of the traditional healthcare system and encourages disease prevention with overall well-being in a geographic or virtual community setting. Such entities exponentially leverage technology with evidence-based nudges to help address social determinants of health in a community (e.g., education, food, housing, etc.)/ Based on the maturity stage of ICT interventions in a particular rural community, avenues may explored such as Assisted or non-assisted tele-consultation at home

with veteran practitioners; Continuum of Primary Healthcare from home to PHCs/ CHCs/ Diagnostic Labs; Ambulance alignment for emergencies; Integrated monitoring and data driven decision making etc.

This session was summarized by Shri (Dr.) Bhushan, wherein it was mentioned that a focused conference and/ or workshop should be organized on Health sector to share similar enabling initiatives undertaken at GP level in India. In the Smart Health area, Shri (Dr.) Bhushan also mentioned about the Digital health Mission akin to the UPI of Health Sector. Once implemented, every citizen, practitioner, and facility, along with other critical stakeholders of the health ecosystem, will be designated by a unique digital ID to facilitate seamless healthcare service delivery. This mission will also include creation of electronic health records (EHRs) of every patient, which in turn will allow digital access of patient's medical history, anytime, anywhere.

G. Session VI- North-East Region oriented approach

A presentation was made by Shri Lok Ranjan, Secretary, Ministry of Development of Northeastern Region (MoDONER) in which highlighted that various agencies are working in numerous rural areas across India, successful implementation of their respective initiatives in the remote and geographically harsh terrain of the North Eastern region will certainly be more fulfilling and impactful. Shri Ranjan also briefed about SAMBHAV which is a mission mode, time bound program for Saturation of Model Gram Panchayats within the existing schemes of the Government to ensure KPIs in selected GPs achieve the State/ National average. Infrastructure and connectivity constraints, unavailability of land for Economic activities, difficult terrain and sparsely distributed population, and strict Forest rules, agitations, and local Issues are some of the challenges being faced by the North Eastern regions which hinders the implementation of various initiatives targeted at rural population. Despite the odds, there have been various success stories in the region which provide a ray of hope. Key such success stories such as Medicines From The Sky

Pilot project of using drones in healthcare, agriculture and disaster management, in collaboration with the World Economic Forum (WEF); Driving the solar power initiative with a great thrust to improve energy access and reduce the carbon footprints in Meghalaya; Star Education Manipur innovative technology and data-driven platform and Nutan Disha initiative, focused on identifying team of teachers as academic leaders to drive the improvements in teaching and learning processes across Tripura.

After the address by Shri Ranjan, Gram Panchayat representatives from across the nation were called to share various innovative and uplifting measures being pursued by them. Following section encapsulates key takeaways from this session:

i. GP representative from Narian West village, Jammu and Kashmir mentioned that the Panchayat has successfully implemented waste segregation and soak pit facility in their region. They are also working towards making their GP plastic free with support from local SHGs in the form of providing woven bags to the residents. They are also actively selling produce made from Pine tree. The GP is also exploring possible avenues to leverage solar pump and solar lighting to advance in the agriculture sector. The GP is also planning to organize Gram Bazaar, wherein local products will be showcased for further economic advancement.

ii. GP representative from Tripura shared that they have been successful in organic farming and rainwater harvesting in waste lands of their GP. From award money secured from outstanding road construction performance under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), the GP has been constructing stalls and awarding them to local population for economic activities, thereby generating additional employment.

iii. GP representative from Bundelkhand, Uttar Pradesh, stated that to solve the acute water scarcity situation in their region, reboring work was done in river front areas. Aimed at 100% literacy, free coaching centers were operated in CoVID-19 times. In order to make the GP plastic free, woven bags made from waste clothes collected

from households were distributed to the residents. Model smart school operations are also in progress at the GP.

iv. GP representative from Rajpur, Hathras, Uttar Pradesh shared that weekly Mahila Shiksha Chaupals are being organized in the GP to raise awareness about Education, Government schemes and any other grievances. Plastic buyback program has been successfully implemented in GP to reduce plastic use. CCTV cameras are being installed at select places to test for resistance to physical damage, connectivity issues and other operational challenges. To promote hand washing in public institutions such as schools and anganwadis, Happy Taps are being installed in collaboration with FICCI and UNICEF. Abandoned buildings are being repurposed as public libraries, wherein students are facilitated in preparation for various competitive exams, along with availability of teachers to solve their problems. Public cremation facilities are also established in the GP. The GP is planning to provide services like free Wi-Fi, exhaustive CCTV coverage, Kisan Mitra and Banking correspondent sakhi to further improve the conditions in GP.

After the inspiring session with GP representatives, Shri Alok Prem Nagar, Joint Secretary (Governance), Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) summarized the events of the current and the previous day for the audience. Shri Nagar also underlined the importance of a consistent approach in developing a Smart Panchayat.

Subsequently, a Valedictory Address from Shri Kapil Moreshwar Patil, Hon'ble Minister of State for Panchayati Raj. In his address, Shri Patil mentioned that before making the village smart, Sarpanchs should be made smart and that it is everyone's responsibility to make a village smart. He also stated that in the next such event, GP heads should be

allocated significant time for sharing their views and address the audience. Shri Kapil Moreshwar Patil talked about longevity of social, economic and environmental welfare at grass root level by leveraging ICT, Internet, GIS and Remote Sensing. He laid emphasis on the challenges such as demand-supply management that Panchayats shall face while adapting to digital infrastructure, growing population and inevitable rapid urbanization. To make the rural development efficacious it is necessary to devise a strategy/model for executing and monitoring the process. A specially designed suitable framework based on Cluster approach, Public Private Partnership (PPP) along with Citizen Participation on the grounds of Science, Technology, Engineering, Regulations and Management will play important role to build next generation smart villages, he added. In the end, Shri Patil reiterated the fact that while it may not be an easy task to make a village smart, it is also not an impossible one, especially with a collaborative approach of all the critical stakeholders.

H. Key Takeaways from the Conference

i. Need for inculcating a change in mindset of rural citizens, which would not only create empowered rural communities, but it would also provide an impetus to the Smart Village Panchayats

ii. Community participation and effort on part of Gram Panchayats, State & District Panchayati Raj officials, NGOs and Industries to initiate projects to empower the Gram Panchayats by adoption of digital technologies

iii. Proactive knowledge sharing amongst GPs on Inter-State, Intra State, Intra District, Intra Block basis, to share best practices from flagship initiatives such as VLE as Gram Sahayaks; Aadharshila, BC Sakhis in UP, Digital Libraries initiative in Karnataka and ILGMS of Kerala

iv. Utilisation of platforms such as Tarang Sanchar for identification of potential sites for installation of towers to promote ICT connectivity

v. Active collaboration with financial institutions such as NABARD, and academic institutions such as IITs, TERI, NIRDPR, IISC for technical support in adoption of technologies at the grassroots level

vi. Mandatory utilization of platforms such as GeM, eSPI-PFMS to bring transparency in functioning of Panchayats

vii. Formulate a specific roadmap by the States for making Smart Villages Panchayats, after detailed discussion with relevant stakeholders at State and National Level

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Detailed Proceedings of National Conference on Smart Village Panchayats held on 15th-16th September 2022, in Indira Gandhi Pratisthan, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

Annexure I- 'Smart Village Panchayats: Empowering Rural Communities; Leaving No One Behind' conference: Minute-by-Minute programme

Date: 15-16th September, 2022

Venue: Indira Gandhi Pratishthaan, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

Day 1 (15th September 2022)

Session	Timeslot	Details	Speakers
Registration	**10:00 – 11:00 AM**	**Registration of Participants and Tea**	
A. Inaugural Session	11:00 AM	Arrival of Hon'ble Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh; Hon'ble Minister, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj; and Hon'ble Minister of State, Panchayati Raj at the venue	
	11:00- 11:05 AM	Visit to Smart Village Panchayat Exhibition	
	11:05- 11:06 AM	Presentation of Angavastra and Welcoming of Hon'ble Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh; Hon'ble Minister, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj; and Hon'ble Minister of State, Panchayati Raj	Secretary, MoPR
	11:06 – 11:09 AM	Welcome Address	Secretary, MoPR
	11:09- 11:15 AM	Presentation by an EduTech and a Telemedicine Companies on Transformations foreseen in the Gram Panchayats through High-Speed Internet (3 mins each)	
	11:15- 11:20 AM	Address by Shri Kapil Moreshwar Patil, Minister of State, Panchayati Raj	
	11:20 – 11:32 AM	Address by Shri Giriraj Raj Singh, Hon'ble Minister Rural Development & Panchayati Raj	
	11:32- 11:33 AM	Launch of e-Learning Module prepared by Panchayati Raj Institute of Training (PRI), Uttar Pradesh	
	11:33- 11:34 AM	Release of a Book on Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDG)	
	11:34- 11:37 AM	A short film on Smart Gram Panchayats in Uttar Pradesh	
	11:37 – 11:47 AM	Address by Shri Yogi Adityanath, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh	

	11:47 – 12.00 Noon	Presentation of One District One Product (ODOP) kit to the Delegation of Ministers by Hon'ble Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh	
Moderator: Shri Amarjeet Sinha, Former Secretary, RD & PR **Rapporteur:** Ms. Karnika Kaushik, Consultant/ Sh. Mohit Rao, Consultant			
B. Smart Village Panchayats & Connectivity	12:00 Noon – 12:15 PM	Smart Panchayats Initiative by Uttar Pradesh	Sh. Manoj Kumar Singh, Additional Chief Secretary, Panchayati Raj Department, Uttar Pradesh
	12:15 – 12:30 PM	Smart Education, empowering Rural India	Sh. Vineet Nayar, Sampark Foundation
	12:30 – 12:45 PM	DigiGaon	Sh. Rishikesh Patankar, COO, CSC-SPV
	12:45 – 1:00 PM	Transparency in public procurement for rural areas	Sh. K.C. Jha, Advisor, Government e-Marketplace
	1:00- 1:15 PM	Integrated Local Governance Management System (ILGMS), Kerala	PR Department, Kerala
	1:15- 1:30 PM	Financing development of Smart Village Panchayats	Sh. S.K. Dora, NABARD
	1:30 – 2:15 PM	**Lunch Break**	
B. Smart Village Panchayats & Connectivity (Cont..)	2:15 – 2:30 PM	Enhancing Digital Network Coverage for Rural Areas	Sh. Vikram Tewatia, DDG, COAI
	2:30 – 2:45 PM	Internet connectivity for efficient governance and economic growth	Sh. Pranay Pathak, Reliance Jio
	2:45 – 3:00 PM	Technological alternatives for Rural connectivity	Prof. Krishna Sirohi, Professor of Practice, IIT Delhi
	3:00- 3:15 PM	Role of Smart Connectivity in Smart Village Panchayats	Representative from BBNL

	3:15 – 3:30 PM	QnA Session; Summary by Moderator	

Moderator: Shri Madan Padaki, CEO & Founder, 1Bridge
Rapporteur: Sh. Shlokarth Trivedi, Consultant/ Ms. Rituparna Ghosh Paul, Consultant

C. Skilled ICT Manpower	03:30- 03:45 PM	Unnat Bharat Abhiyan	Prof. V K Vijay, IIT Delhi
	03:45- 04:00 PM	Digital Libraries, Karnataka	Panchayat representatives, Karnataka
	04:00- 04:15 PM	Upskilling Rural India	1. Sh. Vamsi Udaigiri, CEO, Hesa Global 2. Sh. Sourjyendu Medda, CEO, Dealshare.in
	04:15- 04:30 PM	SimbaQuartz-Tangra Business Model of Rural Entrepreneurship	Ms. Mandeep Kaur, SimbaQuartz
	4:30- 4:45 PM	QnA Session; Summary by Moderator	

Moderator: Sh. Abhay Bhakre, DG, BEE
Rapporteur: Sh. Sushant Sudhir, Consultant/ Sh. Garvit Trivedi, Consultant

D. Smart Energy	4:45- 5:00 PM	Challenges in adopting renewable energy in rural areas	Ms. Pavitra Sinha, Shakti Foundation
	5:00- 5:15 PM	Experience sharing by Odanthurai Gram Panchayat, Tamil Nadu	Representative from Odanthurai Gram Panchayat, Tamil Nadu
	5:15- 5:30 PM	Low Cost and commercially feasible energy solutions	Shri Shirish Garud, Renewable Energy Technologies, TERI
	5:30- 5:45 PM	Initiatives of Government for rural areas	Shri J K Jethani, Scientist, MNRE
	5:45- 6:00 PM	QnA session; Summary by Moderator	
	6:00 – 6:30 PM	**High Tea**	

Day 2 (16th September 2022)

Session	Timeslot	Details	Speakers
Registration	**9:00- 10:00 AM**	**Registration of Participants and Tea**	
Moderator: Sh. Aloke Agarwal, Partner, Deloitte			
Rapporteur: Sh. Subodh Gurjar, Consultant/ Sh. Prerit Saraswat, Consultant			
E. Smart Agriculture & Smart Environment	10:00- 10:15 AM	Transformative technologies in agriculture	Abhay Pareek, Lead, Fourth Industrial Revolution for Agriculture, World Economic Forum
	10:15 – 10:30 AM	Crop Residue Management	Debashish Biswas, Partner, Deloitte
	10:30 – 10:45 AM	Smart Agriculture Opportunities	Shri Arjun Venkataraman, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
	10:45 – 11:00 AM	Impact of One District One Product scheme on rural economy of India	Shri Minhaj Alam, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Food Processing Industries
	11:00 – 11:15 AM	Rural Bazaar	Dr. Ketaki Bapat, O/o Principal Scientific Advisor
	11:15 – 11:30 AM	Opportunities in Rural e-Commerce	Mr Shireesh Joshi, Chief Business Officer, Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)
	11:30 – 11:45 AM	e-Choupal model- Leveraging Information Technology in Indian agribusiness sector	Mr Kumar Pranesh, Regional Head, ITC
	11:45 AM – 12:00 Noon	Best Practices in Smart Agriculture	Shri Anuj Agarwal, Chairman, CII Young Indian, Uttar Pradesh
	12:00 Noon- 12:15 PM	Meenangadi Panchayat, Kerala- towards Carbon Neutrality	• Shri K E Vinayan, President, Meenangadi Gram Panchayat • Ms. Beena Vijayan, Member, Sultan

			Bathery Block Panchayat Wayanad
	12:15 - 12:30 PM	Environmental best Practices for Rural areas	Representative from United Nations Environment Programme
	12:30 - 12:45 PM	QnA Session; Summary by Moderator	
1:00 – 2:00 PM	**Lunch Break**		
Moderator: Dr. Indu Bhushan, Ex-CEO, National Health Authority **Rapporteur:** Sh. Mohit Gupta, Consultant/ Sh. Tapin Bhati, Consultant			
F. Smart Health	2:00 – 2:15 PM	Citizen Centric Healthcare leveraging IT & associated technologies	Shri Amit Singh, Executive Director, Deloitte
	2:15 – 2:30 PM	Electronic Health Records initiative of Andhra Pradesh	Shri J Nivas, Commissioner H&FW, Andhra Pradesh
	2:30 – 2:45 PM	Rural Health preparedness and infrastructure development	Shri Shyamal Santra, Transforming Rural India Foundation
	2:45 – 3:00 PM	QnA Session; Summary by Moderator	
G. North-East region oriented approach	3:00 – 3:15 PM	Community mobilization and participation towards Smart Village Panchayats in Northeast India	Sh. Lok Ranjan, Secretary, M/o Development of North Eastern Region
H. Concluding session	3:15 - 3:30 PM	Discussion Session (Question & Answer) moderated	Joint Secretary (Governance), MoPR
	3:30- 3:40 PM	Valedictory Address	Shri Kapil Moreshwar Patil, Hon'ble Minister of State for Panchayati Raj
	3:40- 3:55 PM	Vote of Thanks	Director, Panchayati Raj, Uttar Pradesh
4:00 – 4:30 PM	**High Tea**		

Annexure II- Brief Profile of Moderators & Speakers at the National Conference

Shri Amarjeet Sinha, Former Secretary, RD & PR

Shri Amarjeet Sinha is a 1983 batch IAS Officer of the Bihar Cadre who is currently a Member of Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB). He is former Advisor to the Prime Minister and Secretary, Department of Rural Development. He has 38 years of experience in Government, largely in the rural and social sector. He has had the unique distinction of having played a major role in designing Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (India's main programme for universal education), the National Rural Health Mission, and in bringing about governance reforms in programmes for rural areas covering livelihoods, employment, housing, social security, skills, urban development and road construction.

Shri Manoj Kumar Singh, ACS, PRD

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Shri Manoj Kumar Singh, is a 1988 batch IAS officer of Uttar Pradesh Cadre. He is presently Addl.Chief Secretary to Government of Uttar Pradesh, Rural Development Department & Panchayati Raj Department. He was Mission Director of flagship programmes like Namami Gange, Swacch Bharat Mission (Urban), AMRUT and Smart City in the Uttar Pradesh. He has received accolade from the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India for successful organisation of Maha Kumbh- 2013 and Kumbh-2019 at Prayagraj.

Shri Vineet Nayar, Founder, Sampark Foundation

Shri Pradeep Rana, Sampark Foundation: pradeeprana@samparkfoundation.org

Vineet Nayar is Founder Chairman of Sampark Foundation and Former Vice Chairman and CEO of HCL Technologies and author of the highly acclaimed management bestseller, "Employees First, Customer Second: Turning Conventional Management Upside Down" (Harvard Business Press, June 2010). Vineet was chosen by Fortune magazine for its first ever Global

Executive Dream Team and found a place on the elite Thinkers 50 List. His innovative, transformative ideas have received fulsome praise from influencers like late C. K. Prahalad, Tom Peters, Gary Hamel, and Ram Charan.

Shri Rishikesh Patankar, COO CSC- SPV

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Rishikesh Patankar has more than 21 years of experience in the ICT domain, including stints at the National R & D lab, top universities abroad, and the Indian Navy. He holds a Doctorate in Computer science. He is also NET Qualified. He manages large-scale multiple projects in the education and skill development domain. His papers are published in reputed journals. He leads the projects such as PMGDISHA and Tele-Law under MeritY and Dept. of Justice, respectively, from the implementation side. He is working as Chief Executive Officer at CSC Academy.

Shri K C Jha, Advisor, GeM

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Mr. Kumar Chandrahas Jha, is currently an Adviser- Business Functions & Integration and former as Additional CEO, GeM . He specializes in research- based computer aided design and simulation. He is currently leading the process of ERP Integration with various Public Sector Undertakings while also over seeing business functions and the execution and implementation of Decision Support System on GeM.

Vinod Kumar K, Assistant Director of Panchayats, Kerala

Shri Vinod Kumar K, Assistant Director of Panchayats, Kerala, designed and implemented Front Office Management in all Grama Panchayats of Kerala for better service delivery and efficient office management based on principles of good governance and total quality management during 2009. Presented with Unique Talent Award by LSGD in 2020 for the contributions towards an efficient and citizen centric civil service. Awarded with Good Service Entry by Director of Panchayats in 2019 for the contributions to the department

Shri S K Dora, NABARD

Shri Sanjay Kumar Dora, is the Chief General Manager of NABARD Uttar Pradesh Regional Office. A developmental banker with more than 3 decades of working experience in rural development banking, Mr. Dora has worked in various capacities in the last 34 years in NABARD Head Office, Mumbai and in various Regional Offices. Shri S K Dora was also a member of the Governing Council of Agriculture Skill Council of India (ASCI)

Sh. Vikram Tewatia, DDG, COAI

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Vikram, is the Deputy Director General, of the COAI. This is India's leading industry association for Telecom, Broadband and Digital services. He interacts extensively with the ICT industry leadership and senior officials at DoT, MeitY, TRAI and other government offices for regulatory and policy matters. He is a member of the Joint Working Group on Cyber Security chaired by Chief Cyber Security Coordinator. An active member of national industry associations - CII, FICCI, Assocham, TSDSI Committees. He participates in many International Workshops / conferences being conducted by ITU, APT etc.

Sh. Pranay Pathak, Reliance Jio

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Shri Pranay Pathak is the CEO for Reliance JIO INFOCOMM in UP(E) circle and heads the roll out and business operations of telecom services.

Prof. Krishna Sirohi, Professor of Practice, IIT Delhi

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Prof. Krishna Sirohi is a Professor of Practice in Bharti School of Telecommunication at IIT Delhi. He has over 33 years of experience of R&D in the field of telecommunication and defense communication product design. He has long experience in Telecom /ICT standardization activities. In his industrial R&D and leadership roles he was associated with Indian Telephone Industries (ITI) Ltd., Bharat Electronics Ltd., Center of Development of Telematics (CDoT) [Head of

Mobile Technologies Division], and Vihaan Networks Ltd. (VNL) [established the mobile telecom R&D and manufacturing company as the CTO]. Prof. Sirohi is currently heading the '5G and Beyond' R&D and Incubation Facility development effort at IIT Delhi towards research translation and field-deployable product development

Atul Sharma, BBNL

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Shri Atul Sharma is Principal GM (Project) BBNL Lucknow

Shri Madan Padaki, CEO & Founder, 1Bridge

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He is the Founder & CEO of 1Bridge, an assisted-commerce platform that delivers digital financial services & aspirational products to our emerging markets - bridging access, choice & convenience gaps for rural customers, while enabling sales, financing & last-mile delivery network for it partners. Today, 1Bridge is present in 77+ districts across South & East India and has over 12,500+ village entrepreneurs engaged in delivering services to their consumers. 1Bridge was recognised as a winner of National Start-up Awards 2021 by Govt. of India and was highlighted for its pioneering work by the Hon. Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi in his Mann ki Baat address to the nation in May 2022. Madan has also co-founded 1verse, with a vision is to bridge physical and meta worlds seamlessly, creating a truly unique platform to revolutionize the way products/services are experienced and bought by consumers, in the metaverse

Dr. Divya Khatter, Unnat Bharat Abhiyan

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Dr. Divya Khatter is Principal Project Scientist at Unnat Bharat Abhiyan.

Dr. Shobha Ananda Reddy Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Dept, Govt. of Karnataka.

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Dr. Shobha Ananda Reddy, is currently working as Officer on Special Duty under Indian Administrative

Fellowship Programme with Panchayat Raj Department. She is an Environmental Scientist with over 20 years of diverse experience in Education,Capacity building, Research, Practice, Advocacy and Administration.

Shri Prasanna V.R, CEO, Sikshana Foundation:

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Prasanna V R. has been with Sikshana Foundation since 2007 and has scaled learning enhancement programs across all the government schools in Karnataka and is also being run in thousands of schools in 5 other states. He is currently leading the effort to scale the Grama Digi Vikasana program to all the 6000+ GPs in Karnataka. Prior to Sikshana, was Founder and CEO of Softrends Inc. USA for 10 years.

Sh. Vamsi Udaigiri, CEO, Hesa Global

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Shri Vamsi Udaigiri is leading HESA Global which is connecting Rural India to corporates, banks, NBFC, and urban so that the Rural consumer should be able to not only buy products but sell their products too. Hesa is redefining rural commerce by providing Last Mile Physical & Digital Connect to Rural India. Hesa's integrated B2B marketplace aggregates and connects both ends and enables buying and selling with doorstep access. Hesa's "Phygital", (a physical network of village level entrepreneurs (VLEs) assisted by a digital commerce platform at every village) approach are the two key aspects that are enabling businesses to reach, showcase, demonstrate, and transact with their rural target audience

Sh. Sourjyendu Medda, CEO, Dealshare.in

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Sourjyendu Medda is a seasoned business professional with over two decades of experience in building consumer brands. He has a proven track record in all aspects of business management including Marketing, CRM, Pricing and Operations. As one of the founding members of DealShare, a social e-commerce start-up, he has played a pivotal role in bringing alive the incredibly disruptive e-commerce opportunity to the heartland of

India; aimed at the mass market by leveraging the WhatsApp-first social virality concept.

Ms. Mandeep Kaur, SimbaQuartz

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From past ten years, Mandeep is working on a vision of "Changing Lives" by setting up an IT Village in the rural roots of Punjab. She has successfully built team of 120+ employees. She is passionate to work on setting up IT villages and curb Village to city Migration, Unemployment, and Brain Drain. She believes "Tangra Business Model" could be replicated and can generate lacs of White-Collar Jobs in India not only in IT but in various other sectors. Under her philanthropic work, she has successfully organized 500+ Shoe Giving & Food Sharing campaigns. Her venture has been awarded as "The Up-coming Start-up of The Year 2016" by ASSOCHAM India and received an Alumni Award for Social Entrepreneurship in 2019. She was also a University Student Ambassador for the Year 2020 for LPU. She is currently the President of "LPU Alumni Entrepreneur Club" & "Amritsar Founders" for the year 2022.

Shri Ashok Srivastava, UPNEDA

Shri Ashok Kumar Srivastava is Senior Project Officer, in Uttar Pradesh New and Renewable Energy Development Agency

Ms. Pavitra Sinha, Shakti Foundation

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Pavithra works in the Clean Power programme at Shakti. With a Master's degree in Energy and Sustainability from the University of Southampton (UK), and BE in Electricals from Visvesvaraya Technological University, Pavithra specialises in data analysis and experimental methods, climate design of buildings and cities, GIS and Bioenergy. Prior to joining Shakti, Pavithra completed six-months internship with Shakti

Representative from Odanthurai Gram Panchayat, Tamil Nadu

Odanthurai Gram Panchayat, Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu, has evolved as role model of self governance due to their ground breaking work in adoption of renewable energy by the Gram Panchayat. The representatives from Odanthurai Gram Panchayat gave a brief summary of their efforts and achievements in adoption of renewable energy.

Shri Shirish Garud, Renewable Energy Technologies, TERI

Mr Shirish S Garud, is a Director and Senior Fellow at The and Resources Institute (TERI) Delhi. He has more than three decades of experience in renewable energy sector. He is a well-known specialist in renewable energy technologies (solar, wind), energy planning and renewable energy policy studies. He has rich experience in solar and wind resource assessment, technology development, and deployment, policy and regulatory studies.

Shri J K Jethani, Scientist, MNRE

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Presently working as Scientist in Ministry of New & Renewable Energy, Government of India, New Delhi he has been associated with formulation of policy and regulations related to renewable energy, preparation of implementation framework for National Solar Mission, introducing bidding in wind energy sector, bidding guidelines and schemes for wind power procurement, implementation of Rooftop solar and off-grid solar PV and Thermal applications, formulation of PM-KUSUM Scheme and its implementation framework, etc. As Executive Director of Association of Renewable Energy Agencies of States (AREAS) revived the functioning of AREAS.

Shri Aloke Agarwal, Partner Deloitte

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Aloke is a Partner with Deloitte and focuses on the agribusiness and rural transformation projects. He has over twenty two years of Development Consulting experience. He has worked extensively in agriculture/

rural development consultancy assignments across various donor funded engagements, such as those funded by World Bank, FCDO, ADB, GIZ, etc. as well as those funded and/or undertaken by different state, central government entities and the private sector.

Shri Abhay Pareek, Lead, Fourth Industrial Revolution for Agriculture, World Economic Forum

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Abhay has more than 14 years of experience of managing multi-stakeholder initiatives focused on agriculture and development finance. Currently he is working as Lead for Fourth Industrial Revolution for Agriculture at World Economic Forum, India. At Forum he is responsible to drive initiative to scale digital agriculture through Public Private Partnership, in coordination with government, industry, farmer organisations and start-ups. Prior to World Economic Forum, Abhay worked with United Nations Capital Development Fund and MSC Consulting in different capacities in Nepal, China, the Philippines and India.

Shri Debashish Biswas, Partner, Deloitte

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Debashish is a Partner with Deloitte's consulting practice and is part of Strategy and Business Design group. He has around 20 years of experience in consulting across multiple sectors. Besides India, his experience spans over several countries including USA, Japan, Russia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Botswana, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman and UAE. His clients include government ministries/ departments, public sector undertakings, donor/ multi-lateral agencies, foundations, government institutions, private sector, among others. Debashish did his Fellow Program in Management (doctoral program) from IIM Ahmadabad.

Shri Arjun Venkataraman, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

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Sh. Arjun Venkataraman represents the India Country Office of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. He focuses on digital programs relating to gender equality, livelihoods, agriculture, WASH and financial services.

Shri Minhaj Alam, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Food Processing Industries

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Shri Minhaj Alam, is a 1996 batch of Kerala Cadre, who widley served in Kerla and Bihar, before moving to the Ministry of Food Processing Industries as Joint Secretary. He has been recently promoted as Additional Secretary, MoFPI and driving force behind the PM Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme (PM FME)

Dr. Ketaki Bapat, O/o Principal Scientific Advisor

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Dr. Ketaki Bapat, is currently working as a Scientist in the O/o Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) to the Government of India. She has been associated with the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre in the Radiopharmaceuticals Division and contributed to various initiatives such as RuTAG (Rural Technology Action Group) at the PSA office

Shri Shireesh Joshi, Chief Business Officer, Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)

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Shri Shrieesh Joshi has been acitvely working in emerging Asian Markets in domains such as FMCG, Telecom, Appliances, Retail, Properties, Furniture, Security Solutions, Agri products, B2B, Premium Beauty Care, Auto, Startups in various sectors

Mr Kumar Pranesh, Regional Head, ITC

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Sh. Kumar Pranesh is the Regional Head (NE) for agri-business division. He has 21 years of experience in sales, supply chain and sourcing. ITC is one of the first organization to adopt IT advancements for the benefit of farmers through their eChoupal initiative. Throughout his tenure, he has played a key role in establishing market linkages and lifestyle improvement for the farmers in the State of UP, MP, Haryana, Punjab and Bihar

Representatives of Meenangadi Panchayat, Kerala

Meenangadi Gram Panchayat of the Wayand District of Kerala, has been leading the efforts towards carbon neutrality and has taken several institutional measures at the Gram Panchayat and Block Panchayat level.

Ms. Manisha Choudhary, UNEP

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Ms. Manisha Choudhary, National Coordinator, Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) India, UN Environment Programme India Office: Ms. Manisha Choudhary is working with the United Nations Environment Programme in India, as the National Coordinator, for the programme on Partnership for Action on Green Economy. Prior to joining UNEP, she was working with the United Nations Development Programme, in India, in the area of Biodiversity Finance

Dr. Indu Bhushan, Ex-CEO, National Health Authority

Shri Indu Bhushan is a 1983 batch IAS officer of Rajasthan Cadre, Ex-CEO of National Health Authority (Ayushman Bharat & National Digital Health Mission) programs that aim to providing national healthcare coverage to the low-income population of the country. He is also ex-Director General, Asian Development Bank. Sh. Bhusan received the Global Achievement Award from the alumni association of Johns Hopkins University, where he was a student

Shri Amit Singh, Executive Director, Deloitte

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Amit Singh is an Executive Director with the Deloitte Consulting. Amit is an accomplished Leader in the Public Sector in India with 20+ years of experience in delivering large digital transformation projects. Amit has worked on marquee projects such as India's Unique Identification Project, e- Panchayat Mission Mode Project for Ministry of Panchayat Raj, Automation of Food Security program of India, National Repository of Birth and Death Registrations, etc.

Shri Shyamal Santra, Transforming Rural India Foundation

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Shyamal Santra is serving as Lead-Public Health & Nutrition Transforming Rural India Foundation. SHYAMAL has extensive experience of nurturing community leadership while piloting and driving scalable solutions for transforming rural India. Having unique association with flagship national initiatives of India - Aspirational District Programme, National Health Mission (NHM) & XV-FC Health Sector Grant, He was in the core-team that architected the first 'Mamta Vahan'; facilitated in transportation of more than 2 million pregnant women in past 10 years and co-created and lead the 'Jharkhand Integrated Development of Health & Nutrition (JIDHAN) Programme, a community centric emergency healthcare response to COVID Response to save mother and child through a compact of Frontline Health Workers, SHGs and Panchayati Raj Institutes

Sh. Lok Ranjan, Secretary, M/o Development of North Eastern Region

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Shri Lok Ranjan is a 1989 batch IAS officer of Tripura cadre, presently working as Secretary to the Government of India, in the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDONER). In the past, he had held various important assignments under Government of India, Government of Tripura and Government of Uttar Pradesh. In his last posting, he was Additional Secretary & Establishment Officer in Department of Personnel & Training, Government of India and incharge of Director, Lal Bahadur Shastri, National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie. He had also held senior positions in the Department of Finance, National Security Council Sectt, etc. previously.

Director, Panchayati Raj, Uttar Pradesh

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Shri Anuj Kumar Jha is Director, Panchayati Raj Department of Uttar Pradesh Government