

eSakhi: Raj's digital literacy project to empower over 1.5 crore women

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Jaipur: Snehlata, who runs a common service centre (CSC) in Alwar district of Rajasthan, has been providing exemplary service by spreading digital literacy among the Banjara community, tweeted Ravi Shankar Prasad, minister of electronics and information technology, on Wednesday.

She has been educating Banjara women about menstrual hygiene and providing low cost sanitary pads.

But she won't be alone in empowering women through digital literacy if the state government's move to train one member of every family in the state goes as per plan.

For the statewide initiative, the government has drawn out a strategy to provide digital training to 1.5 lakh women under the eSakhi programme. Once trained, the eSakhis will make other women digitally literate and help them benefit from public welfare schemes and avail e-governance servi-

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- ▶ Samajik (Social) Suraksha Pension Scheme
- ▶ e-PDS Yojana
- ▶ Raj Sampark Portal
- ▶ Mahila Suraksha App
- ▶ Raj App Center
- ▶ Rajdhaara



ces through mobile phones or computers.

The initiative, conceptualized by the department of information technology & communication (DoIT&C) is being implemented by the Rajasthan Knowledge Corporation Ltd through its nearly 7,000 centres. It has already drawn 35,000 women volunteers.

"About 35,000 women have downloaded the app which can be used to apply for an eSakhi. We have laid out a process for selection. Once selected, they will be given training which will start in the next 15 days," said a top official in DoIT&C.

Through the scheme, the department aims to bridge the digital divide between residents and various state government schemes, ensuring effective service delivery through a digital medium.

The strategy involves training at least four to five women from every village and 10 from every ward in urban or suburbs. In all, 1.5 lakh volunteers will be enrolled as eSakhis, who will further train at least 100 people from their respective villages which is estimated to cover 1.5 crore households.

"The chief minister's vision for women's empower-

ment was realized with the implementation of Bhamashah Yojana. With eSakhi, it's a paradigm shift in the empowerment of women and an example for others to follow. The idea is to empower people to use IT to ensure complete ease of service delivery as well as making themselves happier," said Akhil Arora, principal secretary, DoIT&C.

While the state government has been trying to empower women through Bhamashah, eSakhi is an extension of the scheme to make them digitally literate. Girls in the age group of 18-35 who have passed Class XII and have Bhamashah ID are eligible to apply. They also need to have a smartphone along with email IDs.

"eSakhi will not only train people on how to use important services or IT applications of the state government but also ensure that in the coming days every trained person can access digital services using his or her own mobile or e-Mitra kiosk," said the official.