

Ministry I&B Launches Pilot Phase of 'Gems of India' Challenge to Spotlight Grassroots Digital Creators

Shoot, Upload, Shine: "Gems of India" Challenge Opens for Entries on MyWAVES from 1st August

States and District Administrations to Anchor the Challenge on Ground, Creator Mobilisation to Jury Evaluation

YouTube and Meta Partner the Challenge, Sharing their Creator Ecosystem

As part of the Government's continued efforts to strengthen India's creative sector and promote the emerging Orange Economy, the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting today launched the Pilot Phase of the 'Gems of India' Challenge, a structured national initiative to identify, nurture and promote grassroots digital creators from across the country.



Under the visionary leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister, India has embraced technology as a powerful instrument of empowerment, inclusion and nation-building. Initiatives such as Digital India have democratised access to technology and created opportunities for innovation at an unprecedented scale.

The initiative builds upon MyWAVES, the citizen creator platform under WAVES OTT, launched by Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, Hon'ble Minister for Information & Broadcasting to enable citizens to create, upload and share original content while strengthening India's digital creator ecosystem. Envisioned as a platform to

encourage user-generated content and showcase India's rich cultural diversity, MyWAVES now provides the foundation for the Gems of India Challenge, which invites creators to tell the unique stories of their districts through authentic digital storytelling.

Secretary, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Shri Chanchal Kumar acknowledged that "Every district of India has a story waiting to be told, and Gems of India gives our creators the platform to tell it. This is as much about celebrating our youth's creativity as it is about celebrating the extraordinary diversity of our districts."

The Challenge seeks to create a vibrant nationwide network of creators by encouraging them to showcase the culture, heritage, tourism, traditions, history and distinctive achievements of their districts through authentic digital storytelling, while celebrating the unique identity of every district in India.

How to Participate: To join the challenge, creators can submit videos of 1 to 3 minutes in duration via the MyWAVES section on the WAVES OTT platform. The submission window for the Pilot Phase will open on August 1, 2026, and will remain open until August 31, 2026.

Pilot Phase Coverage and Partnerships: The Pilot Phase is being launched across Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Goa, and Ladakh. This phase is a collaborative effort involving Prasar Bharati, My Bharat, and the respective State and District Administrations. Local cultural and educational institutions will also be actively involved to facilitate creator mobilization and content development.

To further amplify the initiative, the Ministry is collaborating with industry giants YouTube and Meta. Both platforms will help mobilize their creator communities and extend the outreach of the challenge across their networks.

Awards and Recognition: To honour outstanding talent, the program will confer prestigious awards at the District, State, and National levels:

- **District Level:** Up to 20 awards of ₹50,000 each per district.
- **State Level:** One exceptional creator from each district will be selected for a State-level Award of ₹2 lakh.
- **National Level:** During the subsequent national rollout, selected State entries for National Awards of ₹5 lakh each.

To ensure fair evaluation, the District and State Jury Committees will be constituted by the respective administration. These panels will comprise eminent personalities from the fields of culture, heritage, tourism, media, and academia.

Future Nationwide Rollout: Based on the insights and experience gained during this pilot phase, the Gems of India Challenge will eventually expand to cover all States and Union Territories. The ultimate goal is to establish a vibrant, nationwide ecosystem of digital creators who celebrate the unique identity and heritage of every district in India.