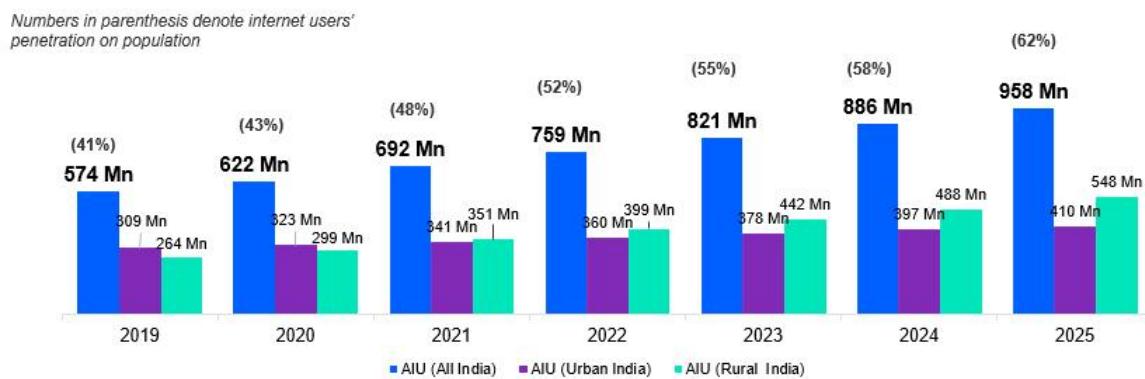


## India's Internet User Base Reaches Cusp of 1 Billion Led by AI Adoption, Short-video Consumption and E-Commerce

*Rural Active Internet Users growing at nearly four times the pace of those in urban India*

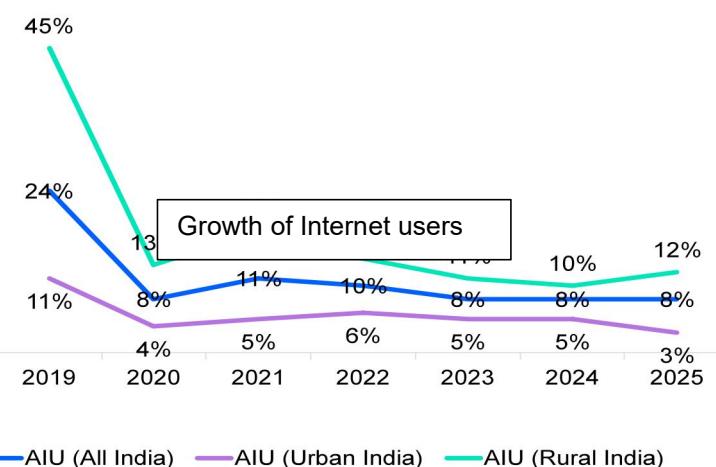
**Bengaluru, January 29, 2026** – Driven by rapid growth in rural India and the rising popularity of short-video consumption, and AI adoption, India's internet user base has crossed the 950 million-mark in 2025. The 'Internet in India Report 2025,' jointly prepared by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) and KANTAR, which highlights these trends, was launched today at the India Digital Summit (IDS) in the presence of Dr. Manjula. N, IAS, Secretary to Government, Department of Electronics, Information Technology, Biotechnology and Science & Technology, Government of Karnataka. IDS 2026 is the official pre-summit event of the AI Impact Summit 2026.

According to the report, India now has **958 million Active Internet Users (AIU)**, marking an **approximately 8% year- on- year growth**, reinforcing India's position as one of the world's largest and fastest- evolving digital markets. The report also reveals that **44% of the users** have engaged with AI- enabled features such as voice search, image- based search, chatbots and AI filters.



Base: ICUBE 2025 All India Population, 1537 Million

This growth continues to be led decisively by rural India, which is now home to

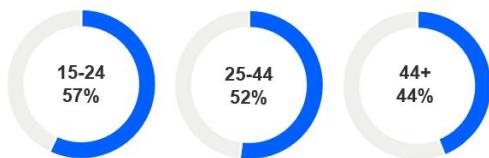


approximately 548 million active internet users. Rural regions now account for over **57% of India's active internet users** and are growing at **nearly four times the pace of urban India**, signalling a structural shift in where and how digital adoption is expanding.

The report highlights below key trends:

1. **Artificial Intelligence has reached mass adoption in India.** **44% users** have engaged with AI-enabled features such as voice search, image-based search, chatbots and AI filters. Usage is highest among younger audiences, with **57% of users aged 15 - 24 years** and **52% of those aged 25 - 44 years** reporting AI usage in the past year.

#### Incidence of AI usage (on AIU) by Age Groups



**AI Activities:** Users who have used AI across activities in L1Y. Eg: Used mic / voice option on various apps (eg: Voice search on Amazon, Flipkart, Google etc.), used images to search on apps (eg: "Search by image" feature on Myntra, Amazon, Google, etc.) or use of Google lens option, used chatbots available on websites, use of various AI generated filters while uploading/clicking pictures on social media apps such as Instagram, Snapchat, etc.

2. **Short-video consumption has emerged as a key growth driver** within this expanding user base. In 2025, **588 million (61%) internet users** consumed short-video content, with rural users marginally outnumbering urban users. Adoption is strongest among younger audiences, cementing their role as a key driver of digital engagement.
3. **Quick commerce is leading a fundamental shift in how Indians shop online**, with social commerce close behind, as the e-commerce ecosystem expands beyond traditional online marketplaces. Among urban users, **230 million people (56%) of the urban active internet base**, shopped online in the past year, with quick commerce and social commerce gaining prominence alongside established marketplaces.



**Traditional Marketplaces:** Online shoppers who have shopped from traditional marketplaces like Amazon, Flipkart and Meesho in L1Y

**Social Media Commerce:** Users who discover products on social media and complete the purchase either within the platform or via redirected links in L1Y

**Quick Commerce:** Quick Commerce shoppers are online shoppers who have shopped from platforms that deliver within an hour. Examples of Quick Commerce platforms include Swiggy Instamart, Blinkit, Zepto, Flipkart Minutes, Myntra Now, Amazon Now, BBNOW, etc.

4. **Multi Device usership is on the rise.** India now has 193 million multi- device internet users, representing 20% of all active internet users, up from 165 million in 2024. Urban adoption stands at 31%, while rural India is catching up at 12%. Also, **shared device usage continues to be a key enabler** of digital access. **18% of internet users** go online through someone else's mobile device, and **nearly 80% of these users are based in rural areas.**

The report reveals that despite strong momentum, **38% of India's population - about 579 million people - remains non- active internet users. However**, this proportion has been steadily declining year after year, signalling substantial headroom for the continued expansion of India's digital economy.

The Internet in India report based on the ICUBE study, is widely recognised as the country's most authoritative source on digital adoption and online behaviour. Drawing on over 30 years of legacy, the 2025 edition is based on a sample of nearly 100,000 consumers across more than 400 towns and over 1,000 villages.

#### **About Internet in India Report 2025**

The *Internet in India Report 2025* based on the ICUBE 2025 study, covering 87,000+ samples, across all major states and Union Territories, is an annual report which is the most comprehensive survey of internet usage in the country. The report is jointly prepared by Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) and KANTAR, the world's leading marketing data and analytics company.

#### **About Internet and Mobile Association of India**

The Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) is a not-for-profit industry body with more than 750 members, including Indian and multinational corporations, as well as start-ups. IAMAI has been instrumental in shaping India's digital economy. IAMAI advocates free and fair competition, and progressive and enabling laws for businesses as well as for consumers. The overarching objective of IAMAI is to ensure the progress of the internet and the digital economy. Its major areas of activities are public policy and advocacy, business to business conferences, research, promotion of start-ups and promotion of consumer trust and safety.

#### **About Kantar**

Kantar is the world's leading marketing data and analytics business and an indispensable brand partner to the world's top companies. We combine the most meaningful attitudinal and behavioural data with deep expertise and advanced analytics to uncover how people think and act. We help clients understand what has happened and why and how to shape the marketing strategies that shape their future. Visit [www.kantar.com](http://www.kantar.com).