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REVUE DE PRESSE SECTORIELLE NUMÉRIQUE

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En bref

NUMÉRIQUE :

- Les data centers désormais classifiés comme infrastructures en Inde, ont le potentiel d'attirer €9 Mds d'IDE dans les 5 à 10 ans, conditionnés à une clarification des réglementations sur des réseaux privés du fibres optiques pour connecter plusieurs centres et des règles de construction.
- Bien qu'il n'existe de loi sur la protection des données personnelles dans aucun des deux pays, le chapitre sur le numérique du nouvel ALE entre l'Inde et les EAU couvre en détail la protection des données et les flux de données entre ces pays.
- En raison du projet de loi Criminal Procedure (Identification) récemment adopté, toute personne arrêtée ou détenue devra désormais fournir des données sensibles (scans de l'iris et de la rétine) à la police, ce qui suscite de nouvelles inquiétudes quant à la protection des données personnelles en Inde.
- L'Indian Semiconductor Mission ambitionne de créer une industrie domestique de puces semi-conductrices pour les ampoules LED, évaluant la demande à plus d'un milliard d'unités d'ici 2024.
- Au cours de la deuxième année du programme PLI pour les téléphones, les fabricants sous contrat d'Apple produiront des téléphones d'une valeur de 5,8 milliards d'euros, dont plus de 60 % seront destinés à l'exportation.

TÉLÉCOMMUNICATIONS:

- Tejas Network de TATA acquiert une participation majoritaire dans Saankhya Labs, une entreprise ayant développé ses propres puces analogiques pour les télécommunications.
- Les nouvelles directives sur les droits de passage pour les opérateurs de télécommunications visent à centraliser les approbations et à établir une règle standard dans tous les États et ministères (chemins de fer, routes et autoroutes).

Revue de presse

1. NUMÉRIQUE

Servers running, but snags remain:
India's data trade faces several pain
points

ET Tech, 20/03/2022

India's data centre industry is expected to attract investments worth Rs 70,000-Rs 72,000 crore over the next five to 10 years, driven by large corporate groups and Cloud services providers, according to an estimate by ratings agency Ind-Ra.

Much of this growth will be centred around Mumbai and Chennai due to their business and infrastructure advantages, strategic location, and cable landing stations, an analysis by Airtel and realty industry consultancy JLL has shown.

Already, major domestic conglomerates such as Reliance Industries, Bharti Airtel, Adani group, Hiranandani group, and multinational companies such as Microsoft, Alphabet Inc and Amazon Web Services have joined forces with traditional data centre players like NTT, Sify, CtrlS, STT and others to invest huge sums in the data centre space.

The government, too, has made several positive changes to its data centre policies over the years.

Technology industry lobby group Nasscom has also put forth suggestions to the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) and the data centre working group of the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY), on how the data centre industry must evolve.

Yet, a lot remains to be done, say stakeholders, as the data centre ecosystem is facing quite a few pain points.

Despite the government, corporations and startups depending heavily on Cloud computing and data centre solutions providers, and the recent budget proposal conferring "infrastructure" status for the sector being unanimously welcomed, issues around power sourcing, captive networks, procuring equipment and ease of doing business remain major irritants.

Industry experts say the restriction on laying captive fibre for data centre use, their heavy dependence on telecom operators, delayed right of way permits, restrictions on power banking and a lack of clarity on building codes and permits for establishing data centres, are slowing the sector's growth rate.

Power Play

First and foremost, the data centre ecosystem is dealing with "exorbitantly high" power costs, say industry players.

"If we have to set up our own renewable power stations, then the transportation charges paid to distribution companies is very high," says Piyush Somani, managing director and chief executive of ESDS Software, a cloud solution provider.

"Moreover, because we need 24/7 power supply, we have to pay almost twice the amount," Somani says.

Renewable energy is not only a cost efficiency metric for the data centre ecosystem but also a sustainability requirement for businesses and clients alike.

To be sure, data centre providers have been working to increase their green power usage through renewable power purchase agreements, power usage optimization measures, and captive power generation, among others.

"We are expanding our renewable energy footprint for our existing data centres in Mumbai and two other greenfield projects," says MP Vijay Kumar, chief financial officer of Sify Technologies.

This ensures that the company gets access to clean energy at a lower cost compared to traditional energy sources. Further, it helps meet its Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) guidelines and enhances return on investments, he says.

At STT GDC India, 36% of its power consumption is currently being met from renewable energy sources.

"In the last one year, we have signed new renewable energy Power Purchase Agreements to procure 149 million kWh (million units) of renewable energy under captive structure to cater to the company's facilities in Maharashtra," says Bimal Khandelwal, chief financial officer of STT GDC India.

The company is also procuring wind/solar and hydropower from offsite generating plants, under multiple agreements and has procured 156 million units of renewable energy during fiscal year 2021, he says.

Nasscom has, in its recent suggestions to Trai, said that electricity distribution companies have put in various restrictions around the usage of renewable energy, even if procured directly from the power producer. This, it has said, stands in the way of companies meeting their commitments on renewable energy usage.

"Customers are highly conscious of their responsibility towards sustainability and preferably would like to partner with green data centres that focus majorly on eliminating carbon footprint," says BS Rao, VP – marketing of data centre firm CtrlS.

The average power demand of a district is around 500 megawatts (Mw), while the power demand (critical IT load) of a data centre ranges

from 15 Mw to 100 Mw. Such a huge requirement for electricity makes it challenging to build a data centre in a mixed-use power zone or even in an industrial estate, since a power distribution network is generally not designed to meet this kind of demand in such an area, according to Nasscom.

Industry leaders say limitations on maximum capacity for power banking and commissioning power through solar plants as well as delays in getting requisite high tension power connections add to the woes of the data centre sector.

"India has sufficient power generation capacity, but last-mile bulk distribution is affected by feasibility and procedural issues. It is time consuming as well as costly to get two redundant high-tension connections to data centres," says Sunil Gupta, cofounder and chief executive of data centre provider Yotta Infrastructure. "Moreover, there are limitations on the maximum capacity for banking and commissioning of power through solar plants."

Infrastructure issue

The budget has proposed to include data centres and energy storage systems, including dense charging infrastructure and grid-scale battery systems, in the harmonized list of infrastructure. This is aimed at facilitating credit availability for digital infrastructure and clean energy storage.

Industry leaders say though this will help future use cases as the advent of 5G technology requires data centres to extend deeper into the country, delays in the construction of data centres have weighed down on growth plans for the sector overall.

Data centres typically need large, enclosed spaces with massive cooling requirements.

Though they house a fraction of the population meant for commercial buildings, they need to provide storage for power and fuel supplies. Yet, they have been tagged under the blanket

commercial buildings code, leading to delays in various safety clearances.

Industry insiders say a dedicated data centre building code will help solve some of the issues.

Gupta of Yotta Infrastructure says the code can define separate guidelines for core and shell construction, fire safety systems, physical security, setback areas, parking requirements, utility buildings, chiller platforms, redundancy of active power feeders, as well as underground storage of bulk fuel.

Nasscom has, as part of the 2021 MeitY working group for the creation of a building code for data centres, been asking for measures to streamline construction-related delays, along with agencies like the Bureau of Indian Standards and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

"At the outset, there is a need for clarifications such as those around hosting data with third-party data centres," says Vimal Kaw, head, Data Centre Services, NTT Ltd. "Other aspects include complex clearance processes, time-consuming approvals, high cost of power, lack of published standards, and the absence of specialized building norms."

While the future of data centres in India will depend mainly on coastal cities with ready access to cable landing stations, JLL says cities such as Delhi-NCR, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Kolkata, and Pune also stand to benefit.

The Delhi-NCR region's data centre industry has the potential for large demand from government organizations.

Pune has developed as a disaster recovery location for banking, financial services, and insurance (BFSI) companies due to its proximity to Mumbai.

Bengaluru has a higher proportion of on-premise data centres operated by global in-house centres of multinational technology firms.

Kolkata is expected to have a new cable landing station in the next few years and is expected to emerge as an important data centre location, it says.

The Covid-19 pandemic has meanwhile provided a good opportunity to take a relook at and redesign data centres of the future, says Rohini Srivathsa, national technology officer, Microsoft India.

"The public cloud market is expected to grow at 24% between 2020 and 2025 and it will be an important part of the country's digital journey. We will have to make sure that we keep up and build for that kind of demand," she says.

Digital trade, government procurement covered under India-UAE CEPA

Fortune India, 28/03/2022

Even as India is not in favour of e-commerce to be part of the negotiations at the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the recently signed India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) has a whole chapter on digital trade. It also has a chapter on government procurement, another area where the government has been very protective until now.

While industry bodies and exporters have expressed happiness over the outcome, experts warn that India's concessions to UAE may make future trade negotiations tougher.

"The elaborate chapter-wise classification of various subject such as Trade in Goods, Trade in Services, Rules of Origin, Minimum requirements, SPS, TBT, Customs Procedure and Trade Facilitation, Trade Remedies, Digital Trade etc will help in easy adaptation by the industry and will also eliminate interpretation issues to a large extent. This will lead to far better utilization of CEPA from India as well as UAE," A Shaktivel, president, Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), said.

"The places where we have breached our earlier position are problematic. Especially on government procurement, once you have agreed with the UAE, how are you going to prevent these issues from coming up in the other FTA negotiations that are in the pipeline? How are you going to tell the WTO that we will do it only bilaterally?" Biswajit Dhar, a trade expert and professor of Jawaharlal Nehru University asks.

The digital trade chapter covers areas like **cyber security, electronic payments, digital invoicing, cross border flow of information, personal data protection, online consumer protection, digital identifies, authentication, paperless trading and domestic electronic transactions framework**. The current practice of not imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions between the two countries will continue.

On personal data protection, India-UAE CEPA says that both the countries recognise the economic and social benefits of protecting the personal data of persons who conduct or engage in electronic transactions and the contribution that this makes to enhancing consumer confidence in digital trade. It says that the both countries shall endeavour to adopt or maintain a legal framework that provides for the protection of the personal data of the users of digital trade. It also says that in the development of any legal framework for the protection of personal data, each party shall endeavour to take into account principles and guidelines of relevant international organisations. Further, it says that both countries shall endeavour to publish information on the personal data protection it provides to users, including how individuals can pursue remedies and businesses can comply with any legal requirements.

The government procurement chapter talks of national treatment and non-discrimination.

The **agreement calls for promoting electronic information flows across borders subject to the laws and regulatory frameworks of respective countries**. It also talks about open data and says that the parties should ensure that such open

data is allowed to be searched, retrieved, used, reused, and redistributed freely by the public, to the maximum extent possible.

CPC: Criminal Procedure Identification Bill raises fears of surveillance in India

BBC News Delhi, 13/04/2022

A proposed new Indian law gives sweeping powers to law enforcement agencies to collect biometric data - a move that has sparked concerns over privacy.

The Criminal Procedure (Identification) bill, which was passed in parliament last week, makes it **compulsory for those arrested or detained to share sensitive data - like iris and retina scans. The police can retain this data for up to 75 years**. The bill will now be sent to the president for his assent.

Opposition leaders have protested against the law, calling it draconian and illegal.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has defended it, saying it will modernise policing and help solve crimes swiftly, "increasing the conviction rate".

But critics fear the rise of a "dystopian" surveillance state.

Why is the bill controversial?

One of the biggest concerns is that it hands over too much personal data to the state.

India does not have data protection laws, so critics say this is akin to giving the government a dangerous snooping weapon - one it could wield against dissenters.

"Since the depth of the data that can be collected is very serious, and the bill lacks any safeguards to prevent the arbitrary collection or the misuse of data, the potential for misuse is extreme," tech and policy analyst Aditya Sharma says India does not have data protection laws, so

critics say this is akin to giving the government a dangerous snooping weapon - one it could wield against dissenters.

Critics add that the proposed law runs counter to India's constitution and a landmark 2017 Supreme Court ruling, both of which protect a citizen's right to privacy.

The top court - in an eloquent 547-page order - had unflinchingly declared privacy as the "the constitutional core of human dignity", and said that any kind of state surveillance must be proportionate and justifiable.

India's current prison law - the Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920 - allows the police to collect only photographs, fingerprint and footprint impressions. But it limits this to those who have been convicted, are out on bail, or those charged with offences punishable with rigorous imprisonment of one year.

The new law, however, massively expands its ambit to include other sensitive information such as fingerprints, retina scans, behavioural attributes - like signatures and handwriting - and other "biological samples".

It does not specify what these "biological samples" are but experts say it likely implies collection of DNA and blood. The police currently require a warrant to collect these samples.

And this now also applies to anyone who is arrested or detained. A court or magistrate can order the police to retain the records even of those who are acquitted or not even tried.

"What you're going to see is the creation of several thousands or millions of criminal profiles in India," digital rights researcher Srinivas Kodali says.

The National Crime Records Bureau will hold the data for 75 years, but experts say the law doesn't explain how it would be protected.

"It's not like the police want to put a lot of people in jails - they don't have the capacity," Mr Kodali says. "But what they want to do is put you under surveillance, tabs on what you're doing."

The bill, he adds, now gives this power to "every constable on the street".

Vikram Singh, former police chief of Uttar Pradesh state, says the proposed legislation is an "excellent tool" to upgrade the country's crime database and investigative tools.

But he worries it could be indiscriminately applied: "You have enhanced the scope of the collection of samples but downgraded the control and supervisory mechanism."

Do other countries have such laws?

It's not uncommon for investigative agencies to mine personal data. Several countries including the US and the UK, collect biometric identifiers - facial features, fingerprints or retina scans - of people who are arrested or convicted.

But unlike the UK and US, India also doesn't have robust systems to investigate alleged police misconduct, Mr Kodali says.

The increasing use of facial recognition technology by governments and law enforcement has become a contentious issue the world over. This is especially true in authoritarian regimes where the data can be used to track citizens.

This happened during the pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong, where the Chinese surveillance system was deployed to heavily crack down on demonstrations. People covered their faces, disrupted security cameras and even avoided public transport that required ID proof.

Of course, such data has its uses too.

Police in the US have successfully used facial recognition to track down criminals and missing

children, but biases in the algorithms have also led to misidentification.

So why should India not have such a law?

India already has a system, launched in 2009, that integrates crime records across thousands of police stations. So, experts question what is the reason to infringe on people's privacy further.

They are wary of what this erosion of privacy means under Mr Modi's government, which has been widely accused of crushing dissent. Several activists, protesters and critics of the government have been jailed in recent years and struggled to get bail.

"Increasing the use of tech in law-enforcement isn't inherently wrong, but India's government has a long record of abusing citizens' privacy and using tech to target opponents, not criminals," Mr Sharma says.

He adds that the state has also made "made increasingly enthusiastic use" of surveillance techniques over the last several years.

Reports have accused Mr Modi's government of using Israeli spyware Pegasus to snoop on political leaders - a charge it denies. Even during the protests against a contentious citizenship law in 2019-20, police in Uttar Pradesh had said it used facial recognition technology to identify protesters who it labelled as conspirators.

There is also a certain fear over the government's ability to protect this data in the age of unscrupulous data leaks and hacks. In fact, data leaks involving the personal information of Indian citizens from the world's largest biometric ID database programme, the Aadhaar, have been widely reported in the past.

"Since the bill allows law-enforcement to gather increasing amounts of data from anyone who is detained, there is nothing in it that would prevent, say, a police officer from detaining a

peaceful protester and collecting their data to use against them later," says Mr Sharma.

He adds that the scope for misuse is also higher because of the "profound lack of data-protection architecture in India".

The Personal Data Protection Bill has been stuck in parliament since 2018 and its still waiting to be introduced, although critics say the current version is significantly diluted and doesn't restrict the government from accessing sensitive data.

"Until a data protection bill is passed in a form that actually makes a serious attempt to safeguard personal privacy, the government knows it basically has a free hand to snoop on citizens," Mr Sharma says.

Semiconductor industry veterans join hands with startups for first high-volume indigenous chip

ETTech, 22/04/2022

Chennai: India has homed in on its first indigenous semiconductor product.

The Indian Semiconductor Mission under the Ministry of Electronics and IT has identified a tiny, but extensively used semiconductor chip used in LED bulbs, for manufacture within the country.

Industry veterans, silicon wafer startups and academics are accelerating the plan to indigenise the supply chain for this chip, the first step in a larger plan to cut into a market dominated by Chinese imports.

Non-profit EPIC Foundation - set up by HCL co-founders Ajai Chowdhry and Arjun Malhotra as well as other technocrats – **is working on a proposal to localise design, manufacture, and packaging of the semiconductor chips.**

The count of chips that go into LED bulbs stand at 700 million units a year and is set to touch 1 billion in two years.

The locally made chips for LED bulbs would serve as a "strong use case" for the global investor community about India's commitment to kickstarting semiconductor manufacturing, Chowdhry told ET.

EPIC has zeroed in on **Bengaluru-based Qwikchip** for its design.

The startup, headed by semiconductor industry veteran Rakesh Adhikari and IIT-M professor Qadeer Khan, is expected to hammer out the design by the end of the year.

EPIC has roped in packaging company Sahasra Semiconductors for packaging the wafers. There is a proposal to upgrade Chandigarh-based fabrication unit SCL for commercial wafer manufacture, paving the way for an indigenous design-to-package supply chain.

"We have also placed a request with the government on the upgrade. SCL can be upgraded within the next 12-18 months, and we've talked to companies that can upgrade it," Chowdhry said.

Satya Gupta, chief executive of EPIC, told ET that the semiconductor chips, which fall under the 180-nm category, require the insertion of a module that would take about 15 months.

The government said late last year that it would explore a partnership with a commercial partner to modernise the brownfield facility at SCL.

The electronics and IT ministry has set up a multi-disciplinary advisory panel comprising bureaucrats, business leaders and academics to kickstart semiconductor manufacturing in India.

Besides Chowdhry and IIT-M Director V Kamakoti, the panel includes Intel veteran Vinod Dham, who has been credited with the development of the Pentium microprocessor.

Last year, the ministry announced a Rs 76,000-crore incentive package for industries looking to set up semiconductor and display fab units.

PLI boom: ₹47,000 crore of iPhones likely to be made in India

ETBureau, 28/04/2022

Apple's contract manufacturers are expected to make iPhones worth ₹47,000 crore in India this fiscal, the second year of the production linked incentives (PLI) scheme that started in April. This will be **almost five times the ₹10,000 crore worth of iPhones made in the country in FY22 by Foxconn and Wistron.**

Expected production for FY23 is also more than twice the requirement for the iPhone makers together to qualify for incentives for the second year under the PLI scheme for smartphones. The scheme requires each of the contract manufacturers-Foxconn, Wistron and Pegatron-to manufacture phones worth Apple's contract manufacturers are expected to make iPhones worth ₹8,000 crore.

Market watchers expect Apple to see record shipments of around 7 million units this year, giving it its highest ever market share of 5.5%, driven by huge demand for a wider portfolio of devices and backed up by higher local production and attractive financing schemes.

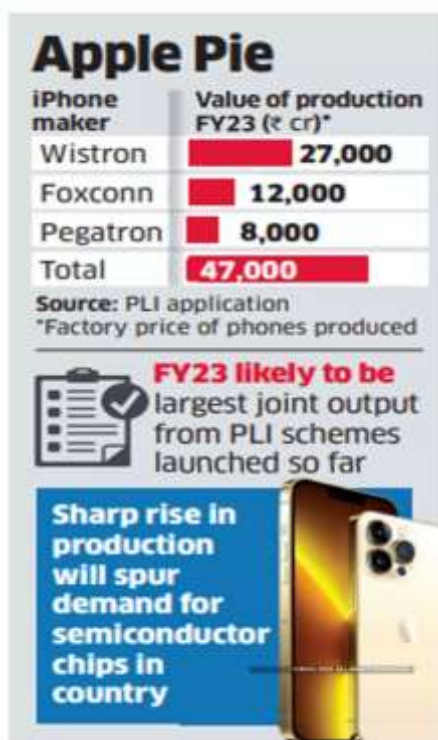
Still, India constitutes **less than 1.5% of Apple's global sales; over 60% of the production of iPhones will be for exports** - one of the primary goals of the PLI Scheme, said people familiar with the matter.

The PLI scheme for smartphones was floated in 2020 in a bid to wean smartphone manufacturing away from China and Vietnam to India, especially amid border tensions with Beijing.

Offering incentives in the form of 4-6% cashbacks over five years, the scheme tries to offset disability in the range of 10-15% that

currently exists between India and its manufacturing rivals. Total outlay for the scheme is ₹40,951 crore over five years.

Over the past 15 years, Apple, through contract manufacturers, built capacity to manufacture \$85-90 billion of iPhones, at factory price, out of China.



\$6 billion in second year of PLI scheme

In India, the company is expected to produce phones worth over \$6 billion at factory price in the second year of the PLI scheme, sources said.

None of the companies responded to email queries sent by ET.

iPhone production in India began in 2017 with iPhone SE and the locally manufactured range now includes iPhones 11, 12 and 13.

Wistron in Bengaluru and Pegatron, which started production this month, mainly make the

iPhone 12, while Foxconn manufactures iPhones 11, 12 and 13 at its plant in Tamil Nadu.

Buoyed by the success of the PLI scheme for smartphones, which has also seen Samsung step up local production in India, the government launched 14 similar schemes across sectors such as IT hardware and white goods over the last two years.

One of the persons familiar with the matter said the total production of over Rs 47,000 crore of iPhones expected this financial year is possibly the largest joint output from any of the PLI schemes.

“While export certainly helps achieve the desired forex, such a sharp rise in production of electronic gadgets will also spur the demand for semiconductor chips in the country,” said Navkender Singh, research director at IDC India. In December last year, the government announced a \$10-billion incentive scheme for semiconductor production and design.

2. Télécommunications

Tata's Tejas Networks to acquire majority stake in Saankhya Labs

LightReading, 04/04/2022

Tejas Networks, part of the Tata Group and a prominent Indian optical vendor, has announced plans to merge with Saankhya Labs in a two-phased process.

The company will initially acquire a 64.4% stake in Saankhya Labs for INR2.84 billion (\$37.49 million) in an all-cash deal that is likely to be executed over the next 90 days.

Tejas intends to acquire the remaining 35.6% stake through a merger process or a secondary acquisition, the company said in a press statement.

Founded in 2007, Saankhya Labs is one of the few Indian companies to have developed its own chip, and was the only non-service provider to be given 5G spectrum to conduct trials.

Over the years, the company has acquired 73 international patents, and it is building software-defined radios (SDRs).

Chipping away

The purchase of Saankhya is in line with Tata's foray into the semiconductor business.

The group is in talks with three states in southern India – Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Telangana – to set up a \$300 million semiconductor unit.

In addition, Tata Consultancy Services, Tata Communications Transformation Services (TCTS) and Tata Teleservices are looking at playing a bigger role in the 5G ecosystem.

Tejas Networks' acquisition of Saankhya Labs, with its own chip and 5G RAN solution portfolio, will help them offer a wider range of 5G products and solutions.

"This acquisition shows our continued commitment to expand our wireless product offerings to address the growing market opportunity," Tejas Networks CEO and MD Sanjay Nayak said in a press statement.

"Saankhya's products would complement our existing 4G/5G radio access network products and position us well for the emerging opportunities in the O-RAN and 5G broadcast space."

Come together

Saankhya Labs benefits by being a part of a bigger group – accessing new markets and scaling its business.

"Our customers and partners will also benefit from a larger product portfolio and an

accelerated roadmap of our product," said Parag Naik, co-founder and CEO of Saankhya Labs.

"This merger will further Saankhya's founding team's vision to build a world-class technology company from India."

Post merger, One Media 3.0 LLC, the largest shareholder of Saankhya, will sell its majority shareholding in the semiconductor firm and retain a minority shareholding in Tejas Networks.

India addresses service provider right of way issues

LightReading, 21/04/2022

India's Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has released draft policy guidelines to bring consistency to the right of way (RoW) rules and regulations across the country.

The industry has been raising the issue of inconsistent RoW policies for quite some time. It becomes all the more critical now as service providers will need to install small cells to boost network capacity and lay optical fiber to deliver on the promise of 5G.

The government initially introduced the Right of Way Policy in 2016, which was amended in 2021. This meant authorities couldn't charge more than INR1,000 (\$13.10) per km to lay optic fiber.

According to the new rules, operators will deal with one central agency for approvals. This will simplify the process and make it easier to lay fiber and deploy base stations and small cells. The government is also in talks with the Ministry of Railways, Road Transport and Highways, so the rules are the same across different sectors.

The telecom department has presented a methodology for calculating RoW area and using street furniture for the deployment of small cells. It will also create a portal to make it easier for service providers to acquire the required approvals.

Just in time

This comes at a time when India is moving closer to the launch of 5G services, and telcos are investing in upgrading networks. The RoW rules will boost digital infrastructure by making it easier to get permissions and approvals. India has only 2,800,000 km of optical fiber, and the National Broadband Mission has set a target of 5,000,000 km of optical fiber by 2024. These rule changes are likely to address one of the major pain points of the industry.

Additionally, 5G requires densification of the network, which demands installing thousands of small cells. Service providers would like to use street furniture, such as street lights, for deploying small cells, which will also require government approvals.

As of now, service providers need to acquire these from multiple government departments to lay fiber or deploy base stations.

The rules and fees vary in different states, and sometimes even in different districts, leading to delays. Further, the rules are all the more complex and time-consuming if the operator has to lay fiber on defense land.

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