



MINISTÈRE
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REVUE DE PRESSE SECTORIELLE NUMÉRIQUE

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G En bref

NUMÉRIQUE :

- Les dépenses publiques indiennes pour le numérique pourraient augmenter de 8,6 % à 8,3 Mds\$ en 2022.
- Le taiwanais Wistron et l'indien Optiemus signent un partenariat pour investir 200 M\$ en Inde dans la fabrication d'appareils électroniques.
- L'Inde finalise un programme de soutien à l'installation de Data Centers qui prévoit des subventions à la performance à hauteur de 1,4 Md€.
- La RBI reporte la création de la NUE (New Umbrella Entity) en mettant en avant des questions sur la sécurité des données.
- Le gouvernement lance le simulateur quantique QSim.
- PhonePe obtient une licence pour vendre des produits d'assurance, et un accord de principe de la RBI pour lancer une plateforme « Account Aggregator ».
- Facebook et Xiaomi vont lancer des services de prêts en ligne en Inde

TÉLÉCOMMUNICATIONS:

- Les données géospatiales gouvernementales seront rendues publiques sur 3 nouveaux sites web.
- Le gouvernement espère récolter 4 Md€ grâce à la mise en concession du réseau de fibre optique de BharatNet et des tours de télécommunications de BSNL/MTNL.

Revue de presse

1. NUMÉRIQUE

Gartner forecasts India's government IT spending to grow 8.6% in 2022

ET Bureau, 19/08/2021

Pune: IT spending by India's public sector is likely to grow 8.6% year-on-year to \$8.3 billion in 2022, on the back of a digitalisation drive by various state and central government entities, according to Gartner.

The software of the IT industry is expected to clock the highest growth rate.

"Digitalisation initiatives of Indian government organisations took a giant leap in 2020 because of the global pandemic. The pandemic forced the government to shift priorities as supply chains and revenue streams dwindled," Apeksha Kaushik, senior principal research analyst at the research and advisory firm, said. "As vaccination rates increase throughout the country and public health improves, the governments will focus on furthering the digitalisation efforts on concerns such as 'citizen experience' and digital inclusion."

Both local and national government organisations are expected to increase spending on all segments of information technology in 2022, except for telecom services.

The software segment is forecast to achieve the highest growth rate of 24.7% in 2022 as the adoption of citizen service delivery applications with use of artificial intelligence and machine learning will improve across citizen initiatives.

To be sure, the overall digital maturity of Indian government organisations is low compared to the west, Gartner said. For initiatives, such as digital licensing, online judicial proceedings, digital taxation, that were initiated as a knee-jerk reaction to the pandemic in 2020, there is still a

long way ahead to achieve full potential as digital inclusion is not fully met.

The forthcoming 5G spectrum auction in India will aim at solving some of these challenges.

"In India, with increasing investments in cloud and cybersecurity, the prime focus of IT spending by government organizations is on building collaborative partnerships, along with technology solutions," Kaushik said. "Government CIOs are looking beyond implementation for signs of the impact from the technology, outcome-based futuristic direction they should take and for IT technology/service providers that go beyond provision to partner and collaborate with them to achieve their mission critical priorities."

As cloud deployments and implementations further the digital agenda, privacy and security continue to be government chief investment officers' top concerns. Key technologies that Government CIOs in India will be prioritising their spending on in 2022 will be digital workplace and business continuity solutions, business intelligence and data analytics, responsible AI and blockchain along with improved data privacy and data sharing tools.

'Make in India': iPhone supplier announces big expansion of India business

Livemint-Reuters, 24/08/2021

NEW DELHI: In a big boost to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiative towards making the country an electronics manufacturing hub, Wistron Corp of Taiwan has partnered with Optiemus Electronics to build products such as smartphones and laptops, among others.

Optiemus Electronics, in a regulatory filing, stated that it "signed an MoU on a Strategic Partnership to form a unique alliance to

strengthen the ties with the \$30 billion Taiwan Headquartered Wistron Corporation's Indian subsidiary Wistron Infocomm Manufacturing (India) to manufacture mobile devices, IT hardware and Automotive- EV products."

Apart from manufacturing mobile phones, the alliance will also work towards design and manufacturing of tablets, laptops, hearables/wearables, telecom products, IoT/Industrial IoT, smart meters/devices and automotive-EV products.

As part of the deal, both the companies will also work towards creating a joint hub in India for Design Solutions Product Development apart from bringing smart manufacturing to India.

Wistron, Optiemus will invest roughly \$200 million to ramp up electronics manufacturing in the next three to five years, the two companies said.

The partnership is expected to yield revenues of ₹38,000 crore over five years for Optiemus, the company said, adding that it plans to hire roughly 11,000 workers for its two plants on the outskirts of New Delhi. It has a workforce of just about 300 now.

"Wistron wants to grow its footprint in India, Optiemus wants to leverage the government initiatives (in electronics manufacturing)... so it makes sense to come together from a win-win point of view," Optiemus managing director A Gururaj, who once led Wistron in India, told news agency Reuters.

The success of India's electronics manufacturing sector is key to PM Modi's ambition of turning the country into the factory of the world, like neighbouring China.

To boost exports, Modi has announced production linked-incentive (PLI) programmes

that pay manufacturers for sales of locally made goods.

Although foreign companies need to make phones and laptops above a certain value to get PLI benefits, there is no such threshold for Indian companies.

That means Wistron and Optiemus, which have won PLI approvals for smartphones and IT products, can make cheaper products and still get the government incentives.

"Optiemus is very advanced discussions with a large global company to make smartphones," said Gururaj, declining to name the client, reported Reuters.

Optiemus Electronics Limited shares on Tuesday was trading 4.98% higher at ₹148.65 apiece on BSE at the time of writing the report.

EXPANSION PUSH

The Wistron-Optiemus partnership is also key to Wistron's business ambitions in India, which have so far rested largely on Apple, its key client in the South Asian nation.

Wistron entered India in 2015 by buying a minority equity stake in Optiemus in a partnership that assembled devices for brands including Taiwan's HTC and South Korea's LG. Wistron has since sold its equity back to Optiemus.

In 2017, Wistron began assembling iPhones in a small plant in the southern tech hub of Bengaluru and has since expanded to a much bigger factory in Karnataka state's Narasapura industrial area.

Worker discontent over unpaid wages led to a riot at the Narasapura factory late last year, leading Apple to put Wistron on probation.

"Wistron's partnership with Optiemus will help it scale and diversify manufacturing in India to other products beyond smartphones phones and key client Apple as well as assemble devices locally for other global clients," said Neil Shah of Hong Kong-based tech analytics firm Counterpoint Research.

Apart from being a key Apple supplier, Wistron also makes laptops for Dell, Xiaomi, Acer and Intel-based servers.

Govt wants to make India a data centre hub, plans INR 12000 crore sops

ET Bureau, 24/08/2021

An ambitious incentive scheme worth up to Rs 12,000 crore is in the works to encourage companies to set up data centres in the country.

The government is targeting an investment of Rs 3 lakh crore in the next five years as part of the hyperscale data centre scheme and is planning to provide between 3% and 4% of capital investment as incentive to companies, along with real estate support and faster clearances.

Government officials said the vision is to "make India a global data centre hub" and termed the scheme's target as the largest so far in terms of expected investment in the country over a period of just five years.

The policy is currently being circulated for inter-ministerial consultations and is expected to be sent for Cabinet approval after it is finalised. The quantum of the incentive is still being discussed and could be in the range of Rs. 10,000 crore to Rs. 12,000 crore.

"Our vision is to make India a global data centre hub. We have proposed that ease of doing business has to be improved and the bottlenecks have to be addressed," a senior government official told ET.

In the recent past, several multinational technology companies such as Microsoft, Amazon and Google have set up data centre regions in the country.

Domestic firms such as Adani Enterprises and Hiranandani Group have also announced aggressive plans to set up data centres in Noida in the National Capital Region.

"No other scheme has such ambition in such a short time, so this will be a major game changer for the high-tech industry in India. We want to invite Rs 3 lakh crore worth of investment in data centres in India in next five years," the official added.

The scheme, which is being spearheaded by the Ministry of Electronics and IT, will also look to promote domestic manufacturing of high-end servers.

"Our focus has been on mobile manufacturing so far; this will change in a very significant way. There will be an incentive of specified percentage on the purchase of servers from domestic manufactured sources which can be deployed in the data centres," the official said.

India is fast emerging as a location of choice for data centre majors.

According to the latest data from Cushman & Wakefield, investment worth a total \$11.4 billion has been planned and committed for the development of data centres in the country and the contribution of global firms in this is more than 65%.

The spate of activity has been attributed to the government's data localisation norms, with regulators such as the Reserve Bank of India mandating that all financial services data belonging to Indians has to be processed and stored locally.

The new data centre policy, which is also being finalized by the government, will also play a big part in setting up a national framework aimed at

attracting more investment through simplified rules and improved ease of doing business.

Last month, the Noida Authority allotted land to Adani Enterprises and MAQ India to set up data centres, leading to investments of about Rs 2,650 crore.

Earlier, Hiranandani Group was also allotted land **for setting up the country's largest data centre of 200 MW**, with investments worth Rs 6,700 crore in Greater Noida.

Adani Group, Mantra Data Centers, NTT Netmagic and Web Werks have also proposed to invest about Rs 8,000 crore in data centres in Karnataka, which is also finalizing its data centre policy.

Delhi, Noida, Gurugram, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad have already emerged as large data centre hubs due to the forward policies of their state governments which offer land to players, other concessions and faster approvals.

"Our policy will make the attractiveness national; and the sops will be available to companies for setting up in any part of the country, so this regional imbalance can be addressed," the official said.

The policy is expected to receive Cabinet approval within the next 2-3 months.

RBI drops plan to issue licenses under NUE, cites data security concerns: Report

Medianama, 26/08/2021

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) **has put on hold its plan to invite proposals for new digital payment platforms citing data security concerns**, according to a LiveMint report. The **RBI's plan permitted private entities to obtain New Umbrella Entity (NUE) licenses** to create platforms that supplemented and competed

with the systems of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

Digital payments in India have grown exponentially in the last few years as smartphones and mobile data plans became cheap. Credit Suisse revealed that digital payments constituted 30% of all retail transactions in India till March 2021 up from 10% in 2018.

The growing size of payments caused the RBI to express concern that financial stability and efficiency are at risk due to the concentration of various critical payment systems with a single operator. NPCI processed over Rs 128 lakh crore worth of financial transactions in 2020-2021 alone. The central bank, in its January 2019 paper, opined that there was a need to promote competition following which it came up with the NUE scheme.

Why did the RBI pull the plug on the NUE scheme?

The Mint report put forth several factors that may have led to RBI's decision such as:

1. The issue of data security vis-à-vis foreign entities compelled RBI to not provide new licenses.
2. **Mastercard's non-compliance** with local data storage norms and the subsequent ban on the company may have caused RBI to reconsider proposals under NUE.
3. Data breaches at MobiKwik and BigBasket forced RBI to account for the threats posed by the involvement of the private sector in handling payment transactions.

"It's likely that the RBI will wait and watch before proceeding with this," a source informed Livemint.

Interestingly, Reuters reported in June that the All India State Bank of India (SBI) Staff Federation and the UNI Global Union requested **the RBI to scrap the "whole process of NUE**

licensing” and focus on strengthening the domestic payments group, NPCI, which operates as a non-profit.

The groups, in a letter, said that the participation of multinational companies can lead to the abuse of user data. They had also predicted then that privatisation would compromise data safety.

Who could bid for the NUE license?

The RBI in its notification had said:

- The applicant must have a minimum paid-up capital of Rs 500 crore, with the promoter/promoter group shareholding diluted to a minimum of 25% after 5 years.
- No single promoter/promoter group shall have more than 40% investment in the capital of the NUE.
- The entity must maintain a minimum net worth of Rs 300 crore at all times.
- Applicants must furnish a detailed business plan covering the payment system they propose to set up and operate, along with documents that prove their experience in the payments ecosystem.
- They would also have to explain the technology and operational structure of the proposed payment systems, the time period for setting up the payment systems, and the proposed scale of operations.

List of applicants who submitted proposals

The RBI commenced inviting bids for licenses from companies in 2020. The companies could submit their bids till March 31, 2021. As many as six consortiums submitted applications for NUE licenses as per an Economic Times report.

Reliance Industries (RIL) teamed up with **Facebook, Google, YES Bank, and Infibeam's** So Hum Bharat Digital to form a consortium.

Financial Software and Systems (FSS) joined hands with Razorpay, Airpay Payment Services, Zoho, India Post, and Zerodha.

Axis Bank and ICICI Bank floated MoPay and included players like BillDesk, Pine Labs, Amazon, and Visa in their consortium.

Tata Group's Ferbine got together with Flipkart, Mastercard, PayU, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Airtel Digital, HDFC Bank, and Kotak Mahindra Bank to form a consortium.

PayTM partnered with Ola Financial, PolicyBazaar, Electronic Payment and Services, IndusIND Bank, Centrum finance, Suryoday small finance bank, Zeta Pay, and Think360.ai. They set up an entity called Foster Payment Network.

iserveU is an Odisha-based financial services startup. There are few details about this consortium but fintech and neobanking startup Niyogin Fintech acquired a majority stake in iserveU last year, Inc42 reported.

The finance ministry expressed concerns about the participation of state-run banks given their stake in NPCI due to which they were conspicuously absent from the process. SBI requested the ministry to rethink its reservations and allow the bank to participate in the process.

Operating parameters of NUE

MediaNama previously reported that the NUE license provides an opportunity to take a slice **out of India's burgeoning payments market.** Major startups, fintech companies, large banks, and global financial giants bid for licenses as the RBI scheme would have allowed them to earn profits by charging fees for transactions.

Some of the other features of the scheme laid down by RBI:

- Interact and be interoperable with the **NPCI's systems**.
- Produce a retail payments rail in the Automated Teller Machines (ATM) space, for White-Label Point of Sale machines, Aadhaar-based payments and remittance services, and other digital modes of payments
- Develop methods, standards, and technologies for their payments systems
- Take care of developmental objectives like enhancement of awareness about the payment systems
- Manage settlement, credit, liquidity, and operational risks of the system

Govt launches QSim to aid quantum computing research in India

Livemint, 27/08/2021

NEW DELHI : The Indian government on Thursday launched a Quantum Simulator (QSim) which will allow developers, scientists, and students to research advancements in quantum computing in the country.

Quantum Simulators are devices that allow scientists to study quantum effects, which are otherwise difficult to study in a lab. They are important tools for developing and debugging quantum algorithms.

The QSim platform is built by the Indian Institute of Sciences (IISc), Bengaluru, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Roorkee, and the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC). The platform will not require researchers to install any software on their devices. They can sign into it from any browser using qctoolkit.com. The simulation will be done using computing resources from C-DAC's high-performance computers, like PARAM Shavak and PARAM Siddhi. Quantum algorithms like Deutsch-Jozsa etc. are also built into the platform.

"The simulator is a software library that simulates quantum computation on our classical computers," said Professor Govindan Rangarajan, Director, IISc. **"The novelty of this simulator is that it includes various types of errors that can occur in a realistic practical device, while other available simulators, including ones from Google, IBM and Amazon, only simulate quantum systems that have no errors,"** he claimed.

Qubits, or quantum bits, are the quantum computing analogue of classical computer bits. They form the basic information in quantum computing. It can handle up to 10-12 qubits on laptops and about 50 qubits on larger workstations. Tech giant Google had announced a similar QSim in December last year, which allows researchers to simulate 30 qubits on a laptop and up to 40 qubits on the Google Cloud. Quantum noise is programmed into simulators so that they can better represent practical equipment, where errors may occur because of the actual physical circuitry, temperature etc.

Quantum computing has been an area of focus **for the government since 2020**. **"We are coming to an era where the traditional computing power growth, through the traditional means of silicon and semiconductor power is drawing to a close.**

We're not going to see the next generation of computing power growth come from a combination of software, new architectures and an overall system redesign and paradigm," said Rameev Chandrashekar, Minister of State (MoS) **for Electronics and IT**. **"That is where Quantum Computing comes in and is clearly going to be at the cutting edge of future demands of computing power. QSim is a gateway for Indian scientists to take us in that direction,"** he added.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had proposed an outlay of ₹8000 crore over a period of five years for the National Mission on Quantum Technologies and Applications. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) had also announced a collaboration with Amazon Web Services (AWS)

earlier, to develop a Quantum Computing Applications Lab in the country, meant to provide access to quantum computing development environments to developers, academics etc.

PhonePe receives insurance broking license from Irdai

Livemint, 31/08/2021

BENGALURU : Payments major PhonePe has received an insurance broking licence from Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai), the Bengaluru-based company on Monday said.

Last year, PhonePe entered the insurtech sector with a limited insurance 'corporate agent' licence, which restricted the company to partner with only three insurance companies per category. Now, with this new 'direct broking' licence, PhonePe can distribute insurance products from all insurance companies in India.

Since launching insurance on its platform in January 2020, PhonePe has unveiled offerings across general, term and health insurance on its platform.

The new broking licence will also allow PhonePe to start offering personalized product recommendations to its over 300 million users, and offering a much more diverse portfolio of insurance products for Indian consumers.

"This license is a big milestone in our insurance journey. This move to broking will give us further momentum and accelerate our growth in this space. We are building a robust, full service platform for our deeply engaged customer base through innovative products in partnership with high quality insurers. This move will lead us closer to our goal of becoming a one-stop destination for all the insurance needs of our customers," said Gunjan Ghai, vice president and head of insurance at PhonePe.

Last week, PhonePe also announced that it has got in-principle approval from the Reserve Bank of India to operate as an account aggregator.

The AA licence will permit PhonePe to launch its account aggregator platform that will enable free and instant exchange of financial data between the financial information users and financial information providers with due consent from customers, in a safe and secure manner.

Over the past years, PhonePe has also launched several mutual funds and insurance products like tax-saving funds, liquid funds, international travel insurance and 'Corona Care', a dedicated insurance product for its users.

The payment fintech's strategic entry into the financial services segment is to diversify its revenue pool as payments continues to be a loss making business.

This comes at a time when merchant discount rates or transaction fees continue to be zero, after the Indian government decided in 2019 to waive the fee for digital transactions powered by Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and RuPay.

India's \$1 trillion digital loan market is the new battleground for Facebook and Xiaomi

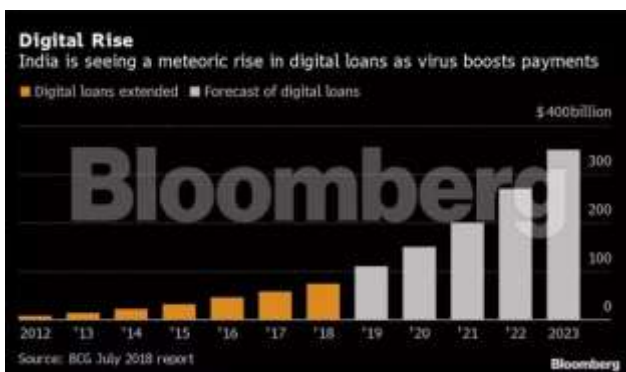
Bloomberg, 31/08/2021

India's digital loan market is becoming a battleground for companies from Facebook Inc. to Xiaomi Corp., seeking a foothold in what's set to be a \$1 trillion industry.

Facebook this month said India would be the first country where it rolls out its small business loan program offering loans via a partner to firms that advertise on its platform. The loans will range from 500,000 rupees (\$6,720) to 5 million rupees with interest rates of 17%-20%, potentially without collateral.

The social media giant's foray into India coincides with **Xiaomi's**, the Chinese maker of everything from rice cookers to gaming monitors, **plans to offer loans, credit cards and insurance products in partnership with some of the nation's biggest banks and startup digital lenders**, the Press Trust of India reported, citing local head Manu Jain.

On Tuesday, Prosus NV said it agreed to acquire Indian online payments service BillDesk for 345 billion rupees (\$4.7 billion), making its largest global acquisition to date in the Asian nation.



The European investment powerhouse's PayU unit struck a deal to buy the 11-year-old startup, creating a digital payments giant with a total volume of **\$147 billion, and taking Prosus's investment in India to more than \$10 billion to date.**

"Amazon.com also made its maiden investment **in the country's wealth management sector this month, participating in a \$40 million round by fintech startup Smallcase Technologies Pvt.**

Alphabet Inc.'s Google is also upping its game. After offering wealth management products such as digital gold, mutual funds on its popular **Google Pay platform, it's now tied up with small Indian lenders for opening time deposits for its customers.**

India's digital payments market is drawing the attention of some of techs biggest names after online transactions surged during the pandemic and traditional lenders turned cautious following

a rise in bad debt. **Digital lending is expected to treble to \$350 billion by 2023 and reach a total of \$1 trillion in the five years since 2019,** according to estimates from the Boston Consulting Group.

"**The payment business hardly makes any money, but lending makes a lot of money,**" said Saurabh Tripathi, managing director and senior partner at **BCG's financial institutions practice.** "Indian consumers are waiting for more appropriately designed digital experiences and many players are **jumping at this opportunity.**"

While the potential of India's loan market is significant, so too are its risks. **The nation's bad loan ratio is expected to rise to 11.3% by March making it the worst performer among major countries for a second consecutive year.**

As well as addressing loan collections by digital firms, the Reserve Bank of India is also planning to regulate online lenders, which include more than 300 startups.

2. Télécommunications

Geospatial data collected by government made publicly available via newly-launched online portals

Medianama, 20/08/2021

Geospatial data like data on natural or man-made geographical features above and below the ground will now be publicly accessible to Indians, according to a government press release. The **data will be made accessible through three online portals developed by the Survey of India (SOI) and the National Atlas & Thematic Mapping Organization (NATMO).**

In May, the government had introduced **a draft National Geospatial Policy** which was geared towards making geospatial data easily available for all Indian citizens. The Department of Science and Technology had invited comments on the policy with a May 22 deadline.

More details about the portals

The three newly-inaugurated online portals mentioned in the press release are:

GEO Spatial Data Dissemination Portal: The online portal has been developed by SOI. Geospatial data generated out of public funds will be available on this portal to government and private users. The press release said that the user will no longer have to visit the SOI office and can purchase and download products online at their doorstep through the Bharat Kosh payment gateway of the Government of India.

MANCHITRAN: Users can see, download, and give feedback about the maps and atlases and different geo-spatial data layers in "MANCHITRAN." It showcases the data acquired by NATMO over 65 years and is intended for students, researchers, industry, decision-makers, policymakers, administrators, etc.

SARTHI: It's a web geographical information system (GIS) application that utilises the new advancements in web application developments with GIS tools such as spatial data visualisation, manipulation, analysis, etc. It would reduce the need to create custom applications and provides a platform for integrating GIS with other business systems. It would enable cross-organisational collaboration in consonance with the new Geospatial Policy and can be accessed in vernacular languages. The press release claims that this will save time and resources in data validation with audit trail, which will facilitate SVAMITVA (Survey of villages and mapping with improvised technology in village areas) – a new project of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. Digital Products provided by the portal

The following products are available on SOI's GEO Spatial Data Dissemination Portal and can be accessed by Indian citizens:

- Digital Geographical Map
- Railway Map

- Political Map
- Digital Geographical Road Map
- Digital Geographical Physical Map of India
- Open Series Map Scale

Draft Geospatial Data Policy, 2021

The Department of Science and Technology had released the Draft National Geospatial Policy 2021, in February which proposes to liberalise the collection and dissemination of geospatial data and allow private companies to conduct surveys and mapping without government approvals. The draft also predicted that the worth of the geospatial market in India would be nearly Rs. 1 lakh crore by 2029-30

The draft policy also noted that the regulatory paradigm in the government, through its various acts, rules, policies, and guidelines, had not kept pace with the geospatial sector, and hence **ended up stifling it. It said, "There is a duplication of efforts and wastage of resources in the absence of availability of reliable geospatial data to access and use by various agencies, government and private."**

The policy claims that it will augment geospatial education in the country, from school level, through standardisation and certification of courses and skillsets.

It also proposes to maintain the quality of surveyors by introducing a mechanism to certify surveying skills.

The policy claims that it will encourage the creation and incubation of startups; promote collaboration, including public-private partnerships between agencies; make Survey of India topographic data easily available, and so on.

Government launches National Monetisation Pipeline; expects to realise Rs 351 billion from partial sale of **BharatNet fibre and BSNL/MTNL's** tower assets

Tele.net.in, 24/08/2021

As per the National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) of central ministries and public sector entities released by the government on August 23, 2021, the government expects to realise Rs 351 billion from the partial sale of BharatNet fibre assets as well as state-run Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited's (MTNL) tower assets.

The pipeline has been developed by NITI Aayog, in consultation with infrastructure line ministries, based on the mandate for 'asset monetisation' under Union Budget 2021-22. In sum, the NMP estimates aggregate monetisation potential of Rs 6 trillion through core assets of the central government, over a four-year period, from FY 2022 to FY 2025. The NMP is meant to serve as an essential roadmap for the asset monetisation of various brownfield infrastructure assets across roads, railways, shipping, aviation, power, telecom, oil and gas, and warehousing sectors.

For the telecom sector, the NITI Aayog has valued over 286,000 kilometre of optical fibre assets laid by Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL) and BSNL under the BharatNet project at Rs 263 billion, as per the NMP document. Further, BSNL's 13,567 mobile tower assets and MTNL's 1,350 towers have been valued at Rs 88 billion.

Both the PSUs jointly own 69,047 mobile towers. Indicative monetisation value of Rs 263 billion has been considered over FY23 and FY24. It may be noted that the actual private investment towards these packages could be lower than the estimated capex and a portion of capex may be met out of grant, the NMP document said.

According to the document, the indicative monetisation value for BharatNet fibre assets is considered based on a capex approach. The total approved cost for BharatNet project is Rs 611.09 billion which includes Rs 420.68 billion for BharatNet (Phase-I and Phase-II) and a maximum of Rs 190.41 billion on viability gap funding (VGF) for implementation of the PPP model of BharatNet in 16 states, according to government.

The bidding process for BharatNet is expected to be initiated during FY22 and the actual outlay of capex will happen over two years from the date of award, the document said. According to the NMP, 525,706 kilometres of optical fibre has been laid under BharatNet project which aims to connect all villages in the country with a high-speed broadband network.

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Responsable de la publication : Service économique de New Delhi
Rédacteurs : Feli VISCO

Pour s'abonner : [Contacter le SER de New Delhi](#)
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