SECTOR SPECIFIC REPORT (Telecommunication)

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Policies Covered In The Edition

1. "GatiShakti Sanchar" Portal: Streamlining the Application Process to achieve "Broadband for All" in India

2. National Digital Communication Policy 2018

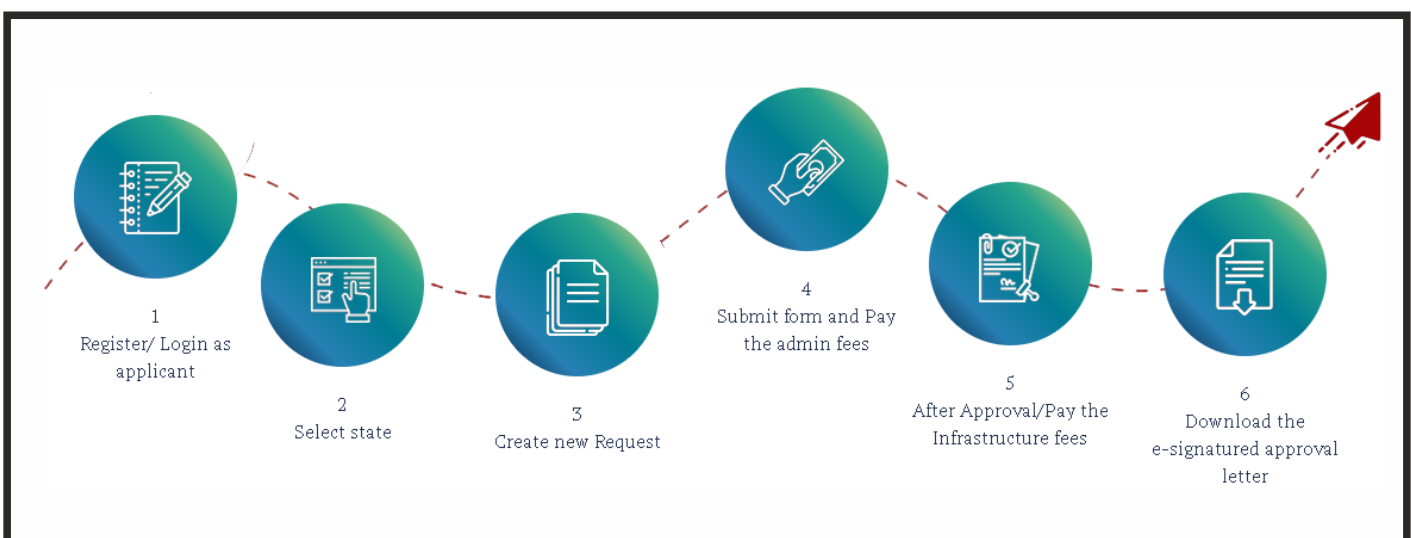3. 5G Vertical Engagement and Partnership Program Initiative

"GatiShakti Sanchar" Portal: Streamlining the Application Process to achieve "Broadband for All" in India

"Broadband will not only provide facilities in the villages but also create a big pool of skilled youth in the villages"- Shri Narendra Damodardas Modi, Prime Minister of India

The Ministry of Communication, Government of India has launched the "GatiShakti Sanchar" portal in May 2022 to give wings to the national master plan of holistic infrastructural development of the country under the PM GatiShakti scheme. Thus, this portal has been designed to strengthen the scheme in letter and spirit through the Centralised Right of Way approval (RoW) method to facilitate the growth of digital communication in India.

The portal will enhance the penetration of the broadband service infrastructure and its access across the length and breadth of the country with a major focus on the universal access to broadband services in rural and remote areas. This will provide new opportunities to the youths in and around their local regions and keep a check on migration in search of employment and empower them with an effective tool of knowledge sharing across the globe related to education and skill up-gradation.

The launch event has witnessed the presence of various government dignitaries along with the leading telecom giants like BSNL, MTNL, Bharti Airtel, and Reliance Jio along with the representatives from the Digital Infrastructure Providers Association (DIPA), Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), etc. It is also coherent with the vision of the National Broadband Mission launched by the Department of Telecommunication in 2019 and the goal of providing "Broadband for All" enshrined under Digital Communication Policy, 2018. Thus, it will ensure universal broadband infrastructure connectivity to Indian citizens as one of the necessities of the digital era and increase the effectiveness of e-governance.

1
Register/ Login as applicant

2
Select state

3
Create new Request

4
Submit form and Pay the admin fees

5
After Approval/Pay the Infrastructure fees

6
Download the e-signatured approval letter

The single interface of this integrated portal is planned to facilitate the speedy disposals of RoW applications and thus work for a collaborative mechanism that facilitates each stakeholder while encouraging the mutual coordination.
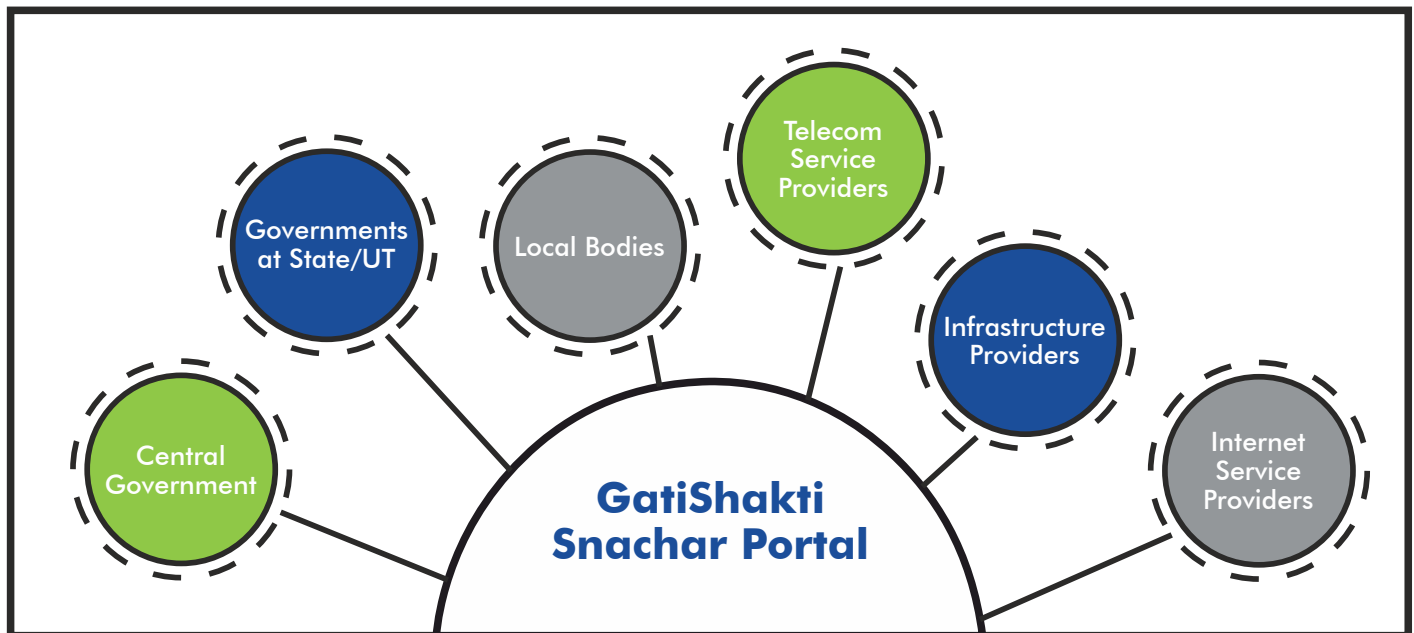
Mutual Coordination of Stakeholders

The portal is designed to facilitate the ease of doing business in the telecom sector by simplifying the RoW approvals from Central, State, and Union Territory government administrations. It will simplify the process of e-governance and service on-demand facilities to Indian citizens by the operators and make them digitally empowered in its true sense.
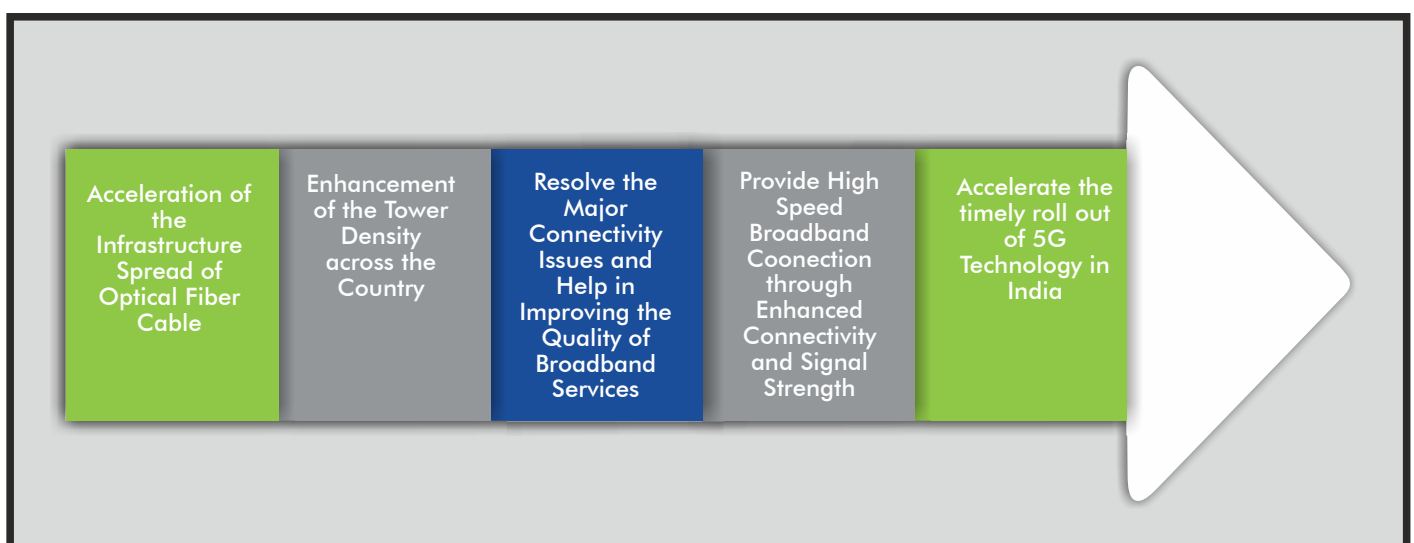
Way ahead for the Portal

The development of the portal by the MP State Electronics Development Corporation has also added a feather to the cap of India's ambitious "AtmaNirbhar Bharat" initiative which is actively facilitating India's digital growth to shape the knowledge economy of India at its best. In a short time, this brings a positive impact through enhanced digital connectivity and helps India to take advantage of sustainable, uninterrupted, and affordable broadband services at their fingertips. Some of the basic features provided by this portal to its users are:

- Speed up the approval Process related to laying down the Optical Fiber Cable Network and telecom infrastructure such as towers.

- Provide 8 hours for 6 working days (Monday- Saturday) Customer Support Service to facilitate its users and stakeholders.

- Effective monitoring through the status of approvals categorically with automatic alerts on processing updates.

36 States/UTs Onboarded		
71307 Applications Received	**36279** Applications Approved	**22449** Applications Rejected
7846 Applications Pending	**4166** Applications Reverted	**566** Applications Withdrawn

Status of applications

Source: https://sugamsanchar.gov.in/

The portal is thus equipped enough to strengthen the broadband connectivity in the remotest parts of the country and will soon bind India to a common efficient broadband infrastructure backbone. This will also facilitate the roll-out of 5G technology in India in an effective and timely manner. It will give a major push to India's digital revolution in the phase of Azadi ka "Amrit Kaal" where everyone will be steering up towards the growth and transformation in each facet of nationhood and all its citizens will be digitally empowered to find their true potential.

National Digital Communication Policy 2018

To strengthen India's journey to cater to the technological and infrastructural requirements to roll out the latest telecom advancements such as 5G, IoT, Machine-to-Machine (M2M) technology, etc, the Government of India has approved India's 2nd National Digital Communication Policy in 2018. At the same time, the government has also renamed the Telecom Commission the "Digital Communications Commission" and widened its roles and responsibilities to accelerate digital communication in the country.

Connect India
Through Robust Digital Communication Infrastructure

Secure India
Through Data Ownership, Privacy, Autonomy, and Security

Propel India
Through Investment, Innovation, and IPR Generation in the field of Digital Communication

Three Goals under the National Broadband Mission

The objectives of the policy document are broadly defined and the targets are set to be achieved by 2022. It is the year when India celebrates its Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav with great enthusiasm.

- Broadband for All including the Rural and Remote Places in India
- Generating around 4 Million Jobs in the Digital Communication Sector and keep a Check on Employment Scenario
- Increasing the Contribution of Digital Communication Sector in India's GDP growth to around 8% from the level of 2017 (~6%).
- Place India under the Top 50 in ICT Development Index from 2017 Level (134).
- Ensure Digital Sovereignty of India
- Increasing India's contribution to Global Supply Chain in the Sector

Objectives of the Mission

For this purpose, the Ministry has designed a strategy, that will help to achieve the objectives well within the time and help India to strengthen its digital communication for both urban and rural populations equitably and seeks quality digital communication services for every Indian citizen.

Creation of National Fibre Authority to establish a National Digital Grid

Planned Infrastructure Development of New Indian Cities and Highway Road Projects to include Common Service Ducts and Utility Corridors

Creation of Collaborative Institutional Mechanism among Various Stakeholders including Central, State, UT governments, etc

Standard process of Cost Estimation and Timeline Settings

Establishing the Mechanism for Speedy Approvals and Common Right of Way

Support the Development of Open Access Next Generation Network

Vision of Digital Communications Commission

The policy was designed to support the next generation. Thus, it is imperative for the government to timely address the information and digital communication needs of Indian citizens in a secure, affordable, ubiquitous, and robust way. So that, the Indian society can better cope with these technological upgrades over time. The mark of 2022 is set to achieve the targets as according to estimates, the timely rollout of 5G technology needs the objective support of this policy framework at large.

The policy is helping India to transition into a digitally empowered society and is making the desired effects on the ground in these last years concerning the rising number of smart phone users in India. The number has risen to 750 million by 2021 and is expected to achieve the mark of 1 billion by 2026. Can create a positive effect only if the devices are power-packed with quality broadband connectivity.

Besides this, the policy has also broadly envisaged the aim of developing a robust infrastructure throughout the country. The scenario will provide universal access to broadband services and

improved digital communication facilities to Indian citizens so that India can speed up its growth momentum. It will help in keeping the data ownership and security of digital communication on priority.

> Provision of Universal Broadband Connectivity in India at 50Mbps to each Citizen

> Provision of 1Gbps and 10 Gbps Broadband Connectivity to each Gram Panchayats by 2020 and 2022 respectively

> Secure Broadband Connectivity at all Uncovered Areas

> Achieve the Targeted Investment of US$ 100 Billion in the Digital Communication Sector

> Expansion of IoT Ecosystems to 5 Billion Connected Devices

> Training of 1 Million Manpower with New Age Skill in the Sector

Benefits of National Digital Communication Policy

The formulation of a comprehensive institutional mechanism to maintain secure and safe digital communication includes complete data protection including safeguarding the interest and choices of individual users in terms of data privacy and autonomy. It will enable Indians to play a major role in the continuously expanding digital economy across the globe. This will only be possible through continuous up-gradation of digital infrastructure and quality of service at affordable prices with enhanced security so that the sovereignty of the country cannot be compromised while scaling up the digital communication in this fast pace world.

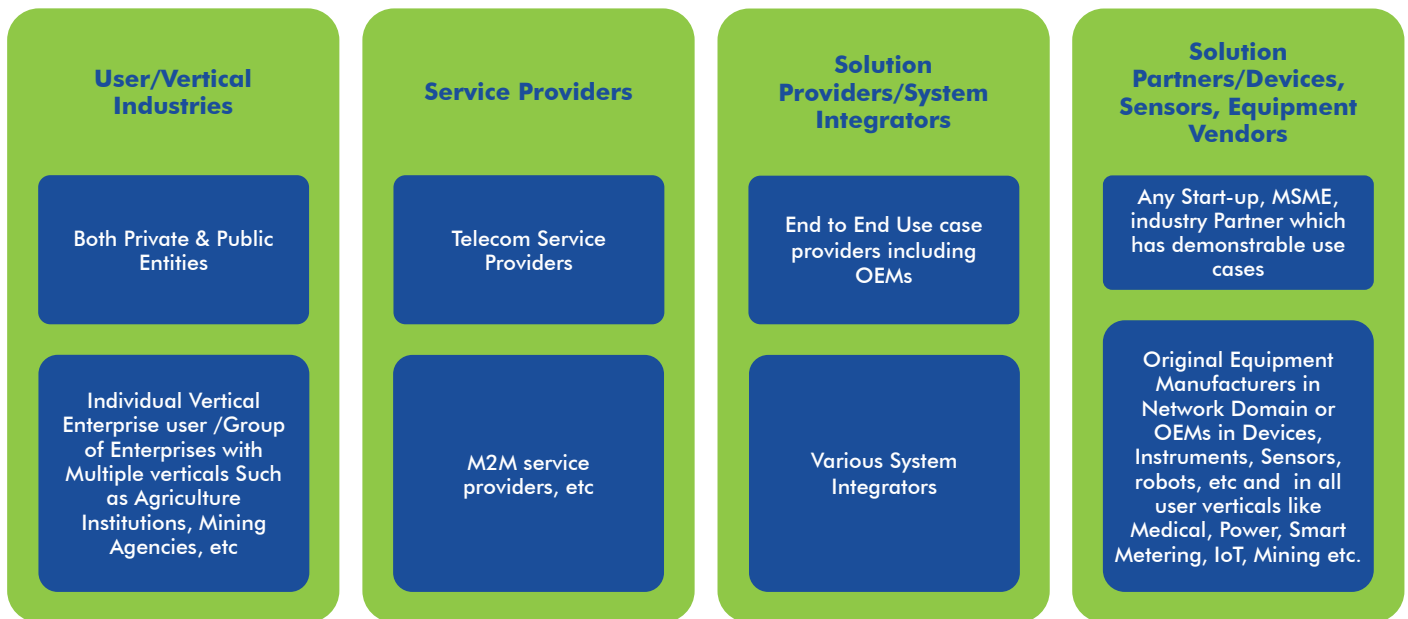# 5G Vertical Engagement and Partnership Program Initiative

Recently, the Department of Telecommunication under the Ministry of Communication has called for Expression of Interest (EoI) under the "5G Vertical Engagement and Partnership Program" (VEPP). The program is designed to develop and use industry expertise in the sector for the testing of innovative 5G use cases and enable stakeholders in the ecosystem for collaborative associations. It will develop an effective and close collaboration among various 5G technology ecosystem partners such as 5G service providers, Partner OEMs, and Solution Providers along with the 5G users.

It will comprehensively address the needs of the industry as well as individual users operating in 5G technology in the succeeding years and touch all other sectors of the Indian economy including Agriculture, Education, Urban Affairs, Tourism, etc. As the government is committed to giving a boost to the digital economy through improved and efficient digital communication in the remotest corner of the country, the initiative will energize the momentum at large.

The 5G technology will pave the onset of 5th generation mobile network infrastructure and service in India that will enable the individuals (Devices, Machines, etc) to connect virtually at a high speed upto 20 Gbps whereas the maximum internet speed of 4G networks is at 1Gbps. This shift in internet network speed provides new opportunities across the sectors including the up skilling of the youth in India. But this will also need close collaboration among various stakeholders to enhance its effectiveness on the ground and facilitate all the verticals of the Indian economy through 5G digital solutions.

The 5G technology will enable digital communication to be efficient and allow devices, and systems to connect virtually to transfer data at high speed. The increased capacity and efficiency of the 5G technology network will resolve the issues of load spikes up to a major extent and provide seamless services to its users. Thus, the need of generating a collaborative model for 5G vertical engagement can be seen as the necessity to write the growth story of India's digital communication.

User/Vertical Industries	Service Providers	Solution Providers/System Integrators	Solution Partners/Devices, Sensors, Equipment Vendors
Both Private & Public Entities	Telecom Service Providers	End to End Use case providers including OEMs	Any Start-up, MSME, industry Partner which has demonstrable use cases
Individual Vertical Enterprise user /Group of Enterprises with Multiple verticals Such as Agriculture Institutions, Mining Agencies, etc	M2M service providers, etc	Various System Integrators	Original Equipment Manufacturers in Network Domain or OEMs in Devices, Instruments, Sensors, robots, etc and in all user verticals like Medical, Power, Smart Metering, IoT, Mining etc.

Categories of Stakeholders

Here the role of the Digital Communication Commission constituted under National Digital Communication Policy 2018 is paramount. It works as an inter-ministerial committee under the guidance of the telecom Secretary and members of technology. The representatives of the Ministry of Electronics& Information technology, and the Department of Science and Technology along with the members from the ministries like education, Jal Shakti, Mines, Road Transport, Tourism, etc also facilitates the process and establish the breeding ground of 5G technology implementation in India.

Strong Collaboration for Similar 5G Use cases across Ecosystem	Encourage Digital Innovation in 5G technology through Hackathons	Awareness Sessions to know about the Various opportunities Present in 5G Technology Vertical	Facilitation of Experimental Spectrum
Effective Industry-Academia Engagement	Live Demonstration on Public Networks	Engaging Regulatory Framework	Development of Use Cases on the basis of User Needs to Accelerate Commercialization and Adoption

Growth of the 5G technology ecosystem in India

As per the government of India's mandate to start the 5G spectrum auction in the 2nd quarter of 2022 and the growing startup ecosystem to serve the Digital Communication industry with innovative use cases, it is the best time to bring ideas for the successful and timely deployment of 5G technology across India. This program is designed to help in completing the trials for the same and help the industry to test the different aspects of their use cases before the actual deployment to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of their prototypes. It will also make the best use of the research expertise of academia and infrastructure support of industry to witness a revolutionary phase of digital communication in the country.

Resources

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