

Nation will not miss 5G opportunity: Minister

The economic impact of 5G is estimated to be more than one trillion dollars

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The economic impact of 5G is estimated to be over one trillion dollars for India, which is aggressively positioning itself to be at the forefront of the new-age technologies, communications minister Manoj Sinha said today.

Vowing that India will “not miss the 5G bus”, the minister outlined the country's strides in telecom over the last five years, highlighting the spike in data consumption, broadband user base, and low tariffs, but added that ensuring safety and sovereignty of digital networks will be a priority for the government.

“While we are gearing up for the next wave of digital transformation, it is also important to ensure the safety, security and sovereignty of digital communications...It is important that we focus on security testing and establish appropriate security standards. We have recently started a state-of-the-art facility for

GAMECHANGER

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preparation of security assurance standards, putting us at the forefront of technology,” Mr Sinha said.

The facility will work on security requirements and also facilitate development of testing and certification ecosystem in the country, Mr Sinha said while speaking at India Telecom 2019 expo organised by Telecom Equipment and Services Export Promotion Council (TEPC).

Terming 5G as a “gamechanger”, the minister said that flagship government

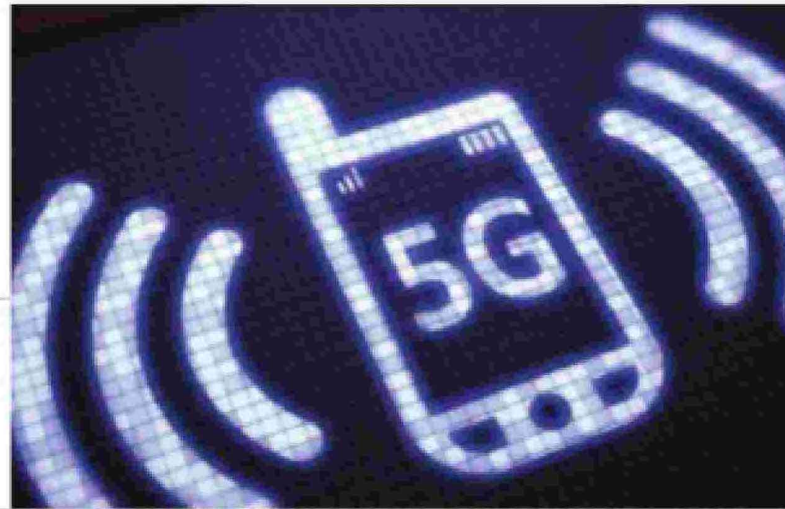
programmes like Digital India and smart cities will ride on 5G.

“The economic impact of 5G is expected to be over one trillion dollars for India, and the consequent multiplier effect is expected to be much more,” Mr Sinha said.

He underscored the need for promoting investments to build underlying infrastructure that would make 5G a success, and added that a working group has been constituted to initiate implementation of recommenda-

tions of high-level forum on 5G that had submitted its report in August 2018.

Mr Sinha also said that the government is in favour of policies and regulations that will facilitate development of 5G-based technologies and services. “To ensure that we are able to launch 5G services in India along with the world, we have established 5G test beds through industry-academia partnerships, and we expect trials to be conducted over the next 12 months,” he said.



India will position itself as a “globally synchronised participant” in manufacturing and development of 5G-based technologies, products and applications, Mr Sinha added. In her address, telecom secretary Aruna Sundararajan noted that connectivity needs of developing and developed markets were different.

“Our challenges are different...we need telecom networks to deliver inclusion, basic services, to connect the unconnected, and serve the under served,” she said, adding that India, with its technological prowess and manufacturing capabilities, is keen to partner other nations who are looking for affordable and robust digital communications solutions.

Mr Rajiv Mehrotra, chairman of VNL Ltd, highlighted the need to bridge the digital divide between rural and urban areas through connectivity solutions, and said that opportunities should be created for promoting indigenous telecom equipment manufacturing.