

## Govt plans 'largest' data centre in Bhopal

Will have five lakh virtual servers, says Ravi Shankar Prasad

### OUR BUREAU

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With India becoming the biggest consumer of data, the country is leaving no page unturned to strengthen its data storage capabilities. Plans are afoot to set up the country's fifth data centre, which is expected to be the biggest so far and to be located in Bhopal.

To be undertaken by National Informatics Centre (NIC), under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), this data centre will have five lakh virtual servers, the highest so far in any centre in India.

It had recently opened one of the biggest data centres in Bhubaneswar, second after the Delhi centre.

The three others are in Delhi, Hyderabad and Pune. The government has spent ₹200 crore to set up the Bhubaneswar centre.

According to senior offi-



Ravi Shankar Prasad, Minister of Electronics & IT, addressing a press conference along with SS Ahluwalia, MoS for Electronics and IT, in New Delhi, on Monday KAMAL NARANG

cial at NIC, the land is already available through the Madhya Pradesh government and soon there will be 'ground breaking ceremony', and the building would be operational within the next two years.

"India's digital ecosystem has got a momentum of its own and this process is going to be irreversible. And as data privacy is concerned we have always said that...data must be protected, and India

should also become a good centre of data analysis because that is also becoming an emerging area," Ravi Shankar Prasad, Minister of Electronics and IT, said here on sharing the achievements of his government in the last 48 months.

Asked about data breach by foreign social media companies or data mining firms, especially when the general elections are nearing in 2019, Prasad said, "Any attempt to India's elections by covert or overt manner, will not be tolerated."

He also said that political parties can do campaigns through social networking sites.

### Rural BPO

Meanwhile, he said the 'Rural BPO (business process outsourcing)' scheme will be expanded to one-lakh seats from current 48,000 seats, across India.

The initiative with an outlay of ₹493 crore was set up, and there are 91 BPOs in small towns and rural areas and the scheme is expected to create

employments opportunities for around 1.45 lakh people in these areas.

### On Aadhaar

Speaking about Aadhaar, Prasad said the world's largest biometric identification programme has already established its usefulness and benefit for over 121-crore unique ID number holders.

While only 61 crore Aadhaar had been generated up to 2014, the number jumped to over 121 crore as on June 16, 2018, he said, adding that as many as 59.15 crore have linked 87.79 crore bank accounts with the Aadhaar.

Nearly ₹4 lakh crore has been disbursed as direct benefit transfer to poor people, which has led to savings of ₹90,000 crore by removing fictitious beneficiaries in the last four years, he said, adding that "We will make Aadhaar robust."

Apart from these, the government is also expanding its digital infrastructure such as eSign, DigiLocker, eHospital, Soil health card, eNAM and BHIM app, he added.