

PM Modi to Launch Merchant Interface of BHIM App Today

Move will allow digital payments using biometric data such as thumb imprint on a merchant's biometric-enabled device

Our Bureau

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to launch BHIM-Aadhaar, the merchant interface of the Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) mobile application, on Friday on the occasion of Ambedkar Jayanti to pave the way for making digital payments by citizens using the Aadhaar platform. This will enable Indian citizens to make digital payments using their biometric data such as their thumb imprint on a merchant's biometric enabled device.

"Any citizen without access to smartphones, internet, debit or credit cards will be able to transact digitally through the BHIM-Aadhaar platform, thus realising Dr Ambedkar's vision of social and financial empowerment for all," the government said in a statement. "Already, 27 major banks are on board with 3 lakh merchants so that they can start accepting payments using BHIM-Aadhaar."

The PM is also scheduled to launch two new incentive schemes for the BHIM — cashback and referral bonus — with an outlay of ₹495 crore for a period of six months. "This is to ensure that the culture of digital payments permeates down to the grass-roots. Under the referral bonus scheme both the existing user who refers BHIM and



Digital Push



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Besides, the PM will announce about 75 townships spread all over India as 'less-cash townships' where the deployment of payment acceptance infrastructure is complete and all the families in the township are covered under training programmes. "The townships selected for the launch have been subjected to independent third party assessment by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and only those townships which have reported more than 80% of the total number of transactions in the township being done through digital modes of payments during the review period are included

in this list. These townships are likely to generate over 1.5 lakh digital transactions every day, thereby leading to about 5.5 crore digital transactions in a year," the government said.

The statement said that India has seen an unprecedented increase in the number of transactions made using several user-friendly digital payment methods.

It said until November last year, 280,000 digital transactions took place, amounting to ₹101 crore in value terms. "In just four months, by March this year, volume of payments using various digital payment modes saw an increase of about 23 times amounting with 63,80,000 digital transactions for a value of ₹2,425 crore. Aadhaar enabled payments have increased from 2.5 crore in November 2016 to over 5 crore in March 2017," the government said.