

Digital India to be Run Like Corporate Entity

IT minister says govt has roped in McKinsey
to prepare road map for digital economy

Our Bureau

New Delhi: With the aim to “corporatise” its Digital India project, the government is looking at creating a Digital India Corporation.

Union minister for electronics and IT Ravi Shankar Prasad said the idea is to have a professional way to implement the programme. “It will be professionally managed with a corporate architecture,” he said on Tuesday at a press conference to list achievements of his ministry after three years of the Modi government.

Prasad also said the government has appointed consultancy firm McKinsey to prepare the road map for the digital economy for the next few years. Government think-tank Niti Aayog will also prepare an e-readiness index of the states. “The digital economy in the country will become a one trillion [dollar] economy in the next five to seven years,” Prasad said.

Since the government announced demonetisation, the volume of digital payments through mobile wallets has increased by 104% to 44.3 lakh, by 8803% under the unified payment interface to 3.31 lakh and by 309% under the Aadhaar

Enabled Payment System to 1.58 lakh as of May 17 this year.

On news about layoffs in the IT sector, Prasad denied any downturn and said that in four to five years, 20-25 lakh jobs would be created in the sector. “I completely deny and refute that there is any downturn in the employment in the IT sector. It is robust. Once the digital economy is here, you will see how much it will progress.”

“In the last three years, almost six lakh people have been employed in our IT sector. In 2016-17, the number of people employed was around 1.7 lakh,” he said.

Prasad said the government’s thrust on a digital economy will also create a slew of new jobs. He said that in the last three years, the number of common service centres has increased to about 2.5 lakh which employ almost 10 lakh people and did business of around ₹1,800 crore out of which ₹600 crore came only from Aadhaar.

Talking about cyber security and the recent ransomware attack, Prasad said about 200 locations were affected and all were standalone computers, since the government had taken proactive measures from March itself by getting the Microsoft patch being installed and by sending advisories.