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PM-WANI Gets Citizen-Friendly Upgrade for Easier Access to Public Wi-Fi

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The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has introduced several citizen-friendly reforms under the PM-WANI (Prime Minister's Wi-Fi Access Network Interface) framework to make public Wi-Fi access simpler, faster, and more affordable across India.

Key Highlights

QR-based authentication introduced for laptops and secondary devices.

Flexible short-duration Wi-Fi plans of 15, 30, and 60 minutes launched.

Standardised PM-WANI hotspot names (SSIDs) for easy identification.

New guidelines issued through DoT Circular Nos. 1/PM-WANI/2026 and 2/PM-WANI/2026 dated 22 May 2026.

All stakeholders directed to implement reforms within 8 weeks; features expected to become operational by July 2026.

Reforms aim to strengthen India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and promote affordable internet connectivity.

About PM-WANI

PM-WANI stands for Prime Minister's Wi-Fi Access Network Interface.

Launched by the Government of India under the Digital India Programme in December 2020.

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Objective: Expand affordable public Wi-Fi access across the country, especially in rural and underserved areas.

PM-WANI Ecosystem Components

PDO (Public Data Office): Establishes and operates public Wi-Fi hotspots.

PDOA (Public Data Office Aggregator): Aggregates PDOs and manages authentication/accounting.

App Providers: Provide applications for discovering and accessing hotspots.

Central Registry: Maintained by C-DOT for ecosystem management.

Benefits of the New Reforms

Easier login process through QR authentication.

Affordable “sachet-style” internet plans for commuters and students.

Better identification of authentic Wi-Fi networks through standardised SSIDs.

Expected to improve hotspot utilisation and digital inclusion.

Important Personalities

Union Minister for Communications: Jyotiraditya Scindia

Minister of State for Communications: Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani

Related Facts

PM-WANI allows small shopkeepers and local businesses to provide public Wi-Fi services without requiring a telecom licence

TRAI previously capped broadband connectivity charges for public Wi-Fi providers to promote affordable internet access.

Under which flagship programme was PM-WANI launched? Digital India Programme.