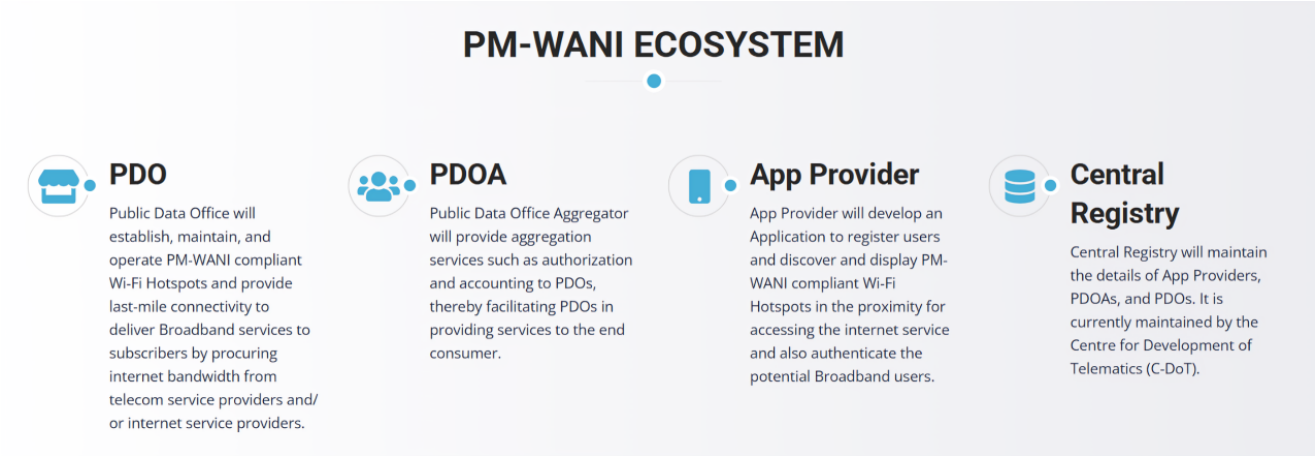
PM-WANI

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance*

Why in News?

Recently, PM-WANI gets major citizen-friendly upgrade to make public wi-fi simpler and more accessible.

- **PM-WANI** – The Prime Minister's Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) framework.
- **Launched** – In 2021 by the Department of Telecommunication
- **Aim –** To accelerate the proliferation of internet services by setting up public Wi-Fi hotspots in the country, especially in rural areas.
- **Features**
- **License-Free Setup –** Small vendors and local entrepreneurs can set up Public Data Offices (PDOs) without needing to pay any registration fees, licenses, or complex government approvals.
- **Ultra-Affordable Plans –** The framework is designed for extreme cost-effectiveness.
- Users can purchase sachet data plans (as little as ₹5 to ₹10 for 1GB) or highly affordable monthly subscriptions.
- **No SIM Card Required –** No need for a traditional telecom SIM card to get online.
- Users connect directly via Wi-Fi using any compliant mobile app.



Recent upgrades

- **Simplified Laptop Connection via QR Authentication –** The DoT now permits *QR-based authentication* for secondary devices like laptops to ease PM-WANI access.
- Users can connect by scanning a QR code on the login page using an authenticated

smartphone app, reducing friction for a faster, secure experience.

- **Flexible Short-Duration Access Plans –** To assist users at public locations like transit hubs and malls, the DoT has advised operators to offer sachet-style validity plans:
    - 15, 30, and 60 minutes
- These plans enhance affordability for commuters and students while boosting operator revenue and hotspot utilisation.
- **Standardised Hotspot Identification –** SSID nomenclature is now standardised with PMWANI branding to help users identify authentic networks.

References

1. PIB| Major Upgrade for PM-WANI
2. PIB| PM-WANI

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