

## Strategy paper for development of the IT Industry in Assam

The strategy for development of IT industry in Assam (IT Strategy) is a long-term action plan for achieving the goal, set in the context of a rapidly changing technology environment in the country and across the globe. For the IT Strategy to be effective it must have measurable links to a business strategy or else it is bound to fail.

The overall industrial development in the State, where IT industry is also a player, remained not very encouraging. Despite best of efforts by all concerned, the State has not been able to attract investments and entrepreneurship compared to some economically advanced states in the country. These calls for a time bound and well balanced effort to make the State a preferred destination for aspiring investors and entrepreneurs in the times to come.

In comparison to the rest of India, IT industry in Assam is nascent. Proliferation of IT related activities centred on research & development activities and industries dealing with petroleum & natural gas till the early nineties in the state. This period also saw the introduction of computers in selected schools for teaching and tea industry and selected government departments for data processing. However, it was towards the late nineties, when Internet was introduced in the State in few selected towns and cities, that IT industry got a much needed impetus. Government however was the main user of IT Technology and tools and the IT industry in the State remained dependent on the inputs in terms of services and support from rest of India.

The Government of Assam had announced the first (Information & Communications Technology) ICT policy in June 2000 followed by the second policy in August 2009 for promoting the growth of Information Technology (IT) sector, generation of employment, augmenting the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) and for overall socio-economic development of the State. A new policy is in advanced stages of consideration, and, would be a strong element to determine the strategy for developing IT industry in the State.

IT industry can be broadly classified in 2 categories – (a) manufacturing & assembly, and (b) IT software and services. The IT software and service industry has been categorized into 3 broad sectors – (i) Software Product and Technology Services, (ii) IT Services, and (iii) IT Enabled Services. Our strategy must address all these three sectors equally to give a just focus for all-round development.

The State needs to vigorously follow up on investment attraction by way promoting “Brand Assam”. Use of consultants’ would be one of the focus areas for the State. The Government aims to be at the highest level of maturity in e-Governance i.e., by transforming itself into a fully integrated e-Government and to become the best e-Governed state on all fronts by taking following measures:

- Subject to technical feasibility Government shall endeavour to provide all the services coming under the Assam Right to Public Service (ARTPS) Act, 2012 electronically.
- A minimum of 3% of plan funds shall be pooled by all departments and placed

with the IT Department for e-Governance initiatives both in procurement of hardware and development of software applications.

- Provide 24 X 7 delivery of services to the citizens through CSCs and other delivery channels.
- Focus will be given to Government Process Re-engineering and Change Management for the effective delivery of citizen centric (G2C) services.
- Open standards guidelines be adopted in all e-Governance solutions.
- The State will structure its e-Governance projects aligned to the Digital India and ensure compliance with applications within the state and also across the country.
- The Government is committed to curb software piracy and to protect the IPR of software companies and will encourage and support the use of Genuine and Legitimate Software in the State.
- The Government will give high priority for upgrading the e- Government infrastructure and online services to the latest Internet Protocol Versions.
- The Government will enter into strategic partnerships with public and private network providers to ensure adequate bandwidth in the remotest places in the State.
- Government will promote wider adoption of mobile governance across government services.
- Unicode compatible local language would be adopted in e-Governance initiatives in the State.
- A comprehensive system of impact assessment of all e-Governance initiatives and other investments made by the State Government departments in ICT projects etc. shall be done through independent agencies from time to time to evaluate the socio-economic benefits and outcome of such investment.

On the Policy front, the following Policy initiatives have been suggested:

- Data sharing: The Government will facilitate sharing of data across departments to establish a connected government and thereby providing citizens with hassle free services.
- Data Security: Government will ensure highest level of security and privacy of citizen data, security and quality audit shall be mandated in all e-Governance applications prior to deployment.
- ESDM: Electronic System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) for design and manufacturing of electronic goods and items in the State would be encouraged.
- E-waste: The Government affirms its commitment to environmental protection by ensuring proper e-Waste management. The disposal of obsolete ICT equipments shall be made in accordance with e-waste management rules of Government of India.
- ICT in School: Include "ICT" in the school curriculum from the post-primary level to ensure that all the students of the state are digitally literate.
- Inclusiveness: Government web content shall be made accessible to the differently-abled by ensuring that all government websites comply with the WCAG 2.0 Level AA. All departmental websites would be standardized for easy

availability of authenticated and updated information

- Government Process Re-engineering (GPR): The Government will redesign the Government processes wherever required to achieve improvement in efficiency of governance and will ensure that proper change management is affected for the delivery of citizen centric (G2C) services with the participation of the Industry.
- New Technologies: The Government will promote the increased use of new and evolving technologies such as cloud computing, wireless technologies and next generation networks etc. to enhance the public service delivery and to ensure optimal use of resources and maximizing public value.
- Social Media: Government departments/organizations will have an active presence in the social media and a social media guideline will be put in place.
- Unified Connectivity (UC): Assam State Wide Area Network (ASWAN) has been the backbone for various e-Governance initiatives in the State so far. Government shall scale-up the existing ASWAN network to a state-of-the-art secured and scalable information highway by integrating it with other networks, such as, Bharat Net and National Knowledge Network (NKN) to provide seamless connectivity to deliver G2G, G2B and G2C services across the State by connecting various Government offices. The horizontal network connecting various departmental offices would also be integrated

Under the Transparency initiatives, the following is proposed:

- e-Procurement: The government will ensure a single unified end- to-end electronic platform for the procurement of Goods, works and services through PKI enabled workflows in procurement transactions. This e-Procurement solution will help transparency and efficiency in procurement in all departments.

Under the Electronics Service Delivery initiatives, the State has proposed the following:

- State Portal: Any time anywhere transactional e-services portal integrated with e-Forms and e-Payment gateway will be made available to the citizen through the state portal and Service Services Delivery Gateway.
- Government will give priority to development of technologies for enabling local language solutions and promote the same while delivering government services online.
- Service levels will be formulated for all e-services and monitored for its strict compliance to ensure effective delivery of services.
- Integration of existing e-governance applications with that of NPR/UID will be implemented in a phased manner.
- Government would make provisions for “On Demand” availability of IT Infrastructure, Platforms and Common Applications using Cloud and similar technologies for the government departments for rapid deployment of their application

