DPI for Digital Trade and Develpoment

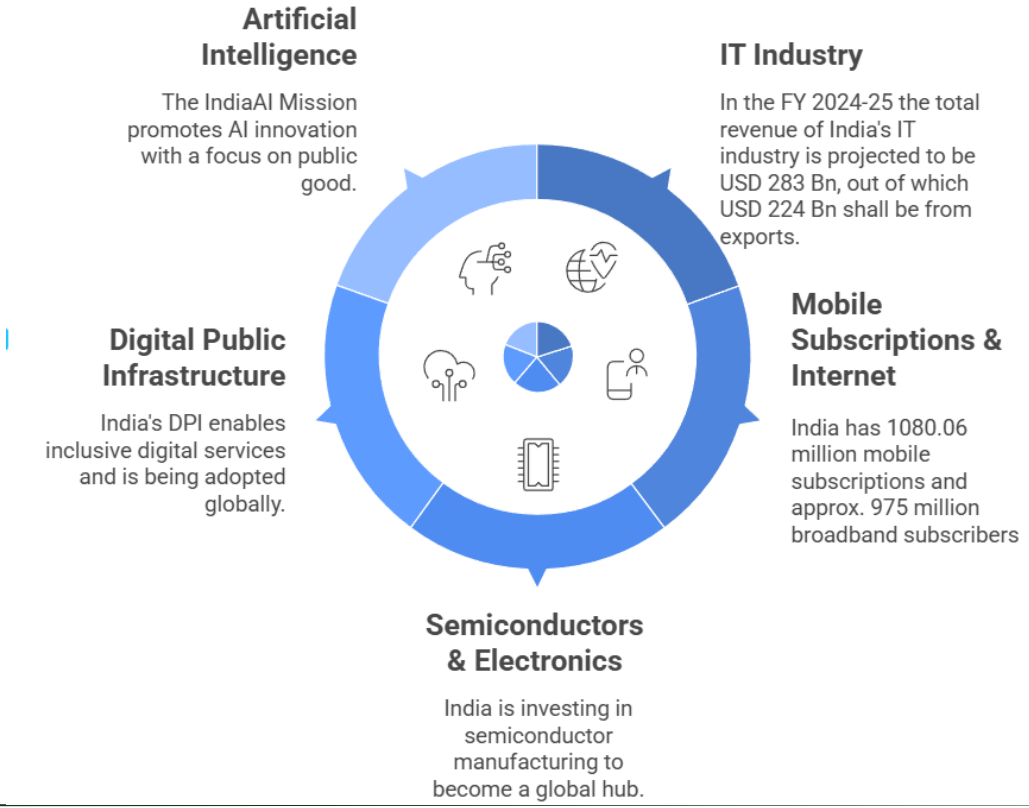
WORKSHOP ON DIGITAL TRADE POLICIES:
REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

July 17, 2025 (Thursday)

Government of India
Ministry of Electronics and Infoamtion Technology

India’s Digital Economy

- India’s digital economy has emerged as a significant contributor to its economic growth, accounting for **11.74% of the GDP (USD 402 billion)** in 2022-23.
- By 2030, India’s digital economy is projected to contribute nearly **one-fifth (20%)** of the country’s overall economy.
- As of May, 2025, there are approx. **975 million** broadband subscribers in India
- Early in March 2024, the Indian cabinet approved a “comprehensive, national-level IndiaAI mission with a budget outlay of approximately **USD 1.2 billion**.
- The India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) has a budget of approximately **USD 10 billion.**



India's Approach to Digital Trade

- Balance between promoting innovation and competition;
- Protecting consumer and business interests;
- Aligning with international best practices; and
- Continuously evolving to address the challenges and opportunities of the digital economy

Key Regulations/Policies

- Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023;
- Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000;
- Consumer Protection (E-Commerce Rules), 2020;
- AADHAAR Act 2016; and
- The Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007

International Alignment: UN, G20, Bilateral and Regional Dialogues

Enabling Innovation Through Data Access - a key DPI Component

- AI Kosha: India's AI Knowledge Repository
  - Developed under the **IndiaAI Mission**, AI Kosha is a **centralized repository of curated datasets, tools, models, and use cases**
  - Designed to support **AI researchers, startups, and industry** by providing quality training data and reusable AI assets
  - Encourages **responsible and inclusive AI development** by promoting access to indigenous datasets across sectors

- Open Data Policy Framework
  - Anchored in the **National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy (NDSAP)** and the **Open Government Data Platform (data.gov.in)**
  - Facilitates **non-discriminatory access to government datasets** to promote transparency, research, and private sector innovation
  - Enables businesses and developers to **leverage public sector data** for building new solutions

DPI and Digital Trade

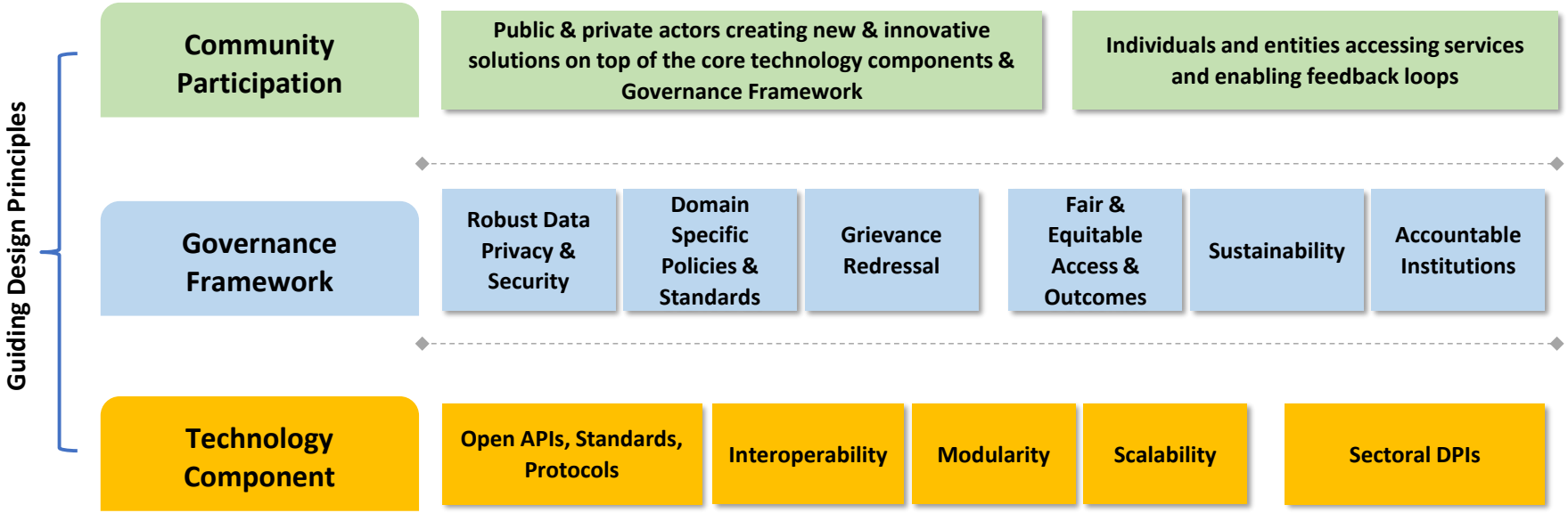
India's Submission to WTO **(WT/GC/W/863)** in **February, 2023** focused on the **role of DPI in promoting e-commerce**, especially for developing countries.

- Key challenges identified for international and domestic digital trade:
  - **Digital divide** in Internet access, especially in LDCs and among marginalized communities (e.g., women, rural populations);
  - **Low e-commerce readiness** in many developing countries (citing UNCTAD B2C Index);
  - **Monopolistic control** by a few global digital platforms;
  - **Lack of trust** in cross-border digital transactions;
  - **Limited access to digital solutions** due to copyright and proprietary systems

➢ India emphasizes that DPI is vital to democratize access to e-commerce and reduce digital inequality

What is DPI?

Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) a set of shared digital systems that should be secure and interoperable, and can be built on open standards and specifications to deliver and provide equitable access to public and / or private services at societal scale and are governed by applicable legal frameworks and enabling rules to drive development, inclusion, innovation, trust, and competition. ***(Source: G20)***



Key Principles in DPI Framework

Openness	Interoperability	Security & Privacy by Design	Inclusivity
Promotion of **open standards** and APIs for broad ecosystem participation.	Ensuring **seamless integration** across platforms and borders.	Strong **data protection**, cybersecurity, and **user-consent** frameworks.	Focus on universal access, affordability, and digital literacy.

India's comprehensive approach for DPI enables rapid scaling of digital trade, making it more accessible, secure, and efficient for all stakeholders.

How Can DPI Address Barriers to Digital Trade for Developing Countries?

Barrier	Impact	DPI-Enabled Solution
Digital Divide	Excludes millions from digital trade opportunities	DPI can ensure broad access through mobile-first and offline-capable solutions. Eg - While **AADHAAR** is primarily known for its online authentication capabilities, it also offers offline verification methods, making it accessible even in areas with limited or no internet connectivity.
High Infrastructure & Compliance Costs	Limits participation, especially for MSMEs	Shared infrastructure and automation lower entry and compliance costs. Platforms such as **UPI** and **cloud-ready** models allow rapid, low-cost deployment of digital payments and services, reducing capital and compliance costs for governments and MSMEs.
Limited Digital Skills & Inclusion	Restricts access for marginalized groups	DPI initiatives use simple, local-language interfaces and community intermediaries (e.g., assisted-tech models, voice-based systems such as **BHASHINI**) to help those with limited digital skills participate in digital trade
Data Privacy & Security	Raises costs, impedes cross-border data flows	DPI solutions use the **DEPA** and consent management framework for enabling consent and privacy by design.

India's DPI for Digital Trade

Trade Process Digitisation

Enables paperless trade: Electronic customs, digital certificates, automated manifests. Reduces processing time and costs.

Example: India has announced the launch of **Bharat Trade Net**, to support the digitalization of trade documents, facilitate seamless data exchange, and improve transparency in trade finance mechanisms.
Help exporters, especially MSMEs, in reducing procedural bottlenecks, improving documentation efficiency and reducing compliance-related delays.

Cross-Border Payment Facilitation

Real-time, low-cost transactions across borders.

Example: UPI-PayNow corridor (**India-Singapore**) showcases interoperable payment systems for SMEs.

Supply Chain Transparency

Reduces verification time and cost; enables automated compliance

Example: A DPI that provides standardized digital identities for businesses (e.g. **Entity Locker** a digital platform designed for the management and verification of business organization documents)

Enhanced MSME Access

Democratizes market access for small businesses. Lowers costs for compliance, payments, and documentation.

Example: ONDC seeks to shift from platform-centric models to an open network, thereby providing equitable opportunities for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to participate in the digital marketplace.

How DPI Facilitates Development

- **Bridging the Digital Divide**
  DPI helps reduce inequalities by enabling access to digital services across regions and populations, within and between countries.
- **Empowering MSMEs**
  DPI lowers operational barriers and costs, especially for MSMEs, enabling their active participation in the digital economy.
- **Fostering Inclusive Digital Ecosystems**
  The inclusive nature of DPI allows smaller players fair access to digital commerce and participation in emerging digital markets.
- **Advancing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**
  DPI acts as a catalyst for achieving SDGs by supporting inclusive economic growth, innovation, and infrastructure development.
- **Enabling Scalable & Interoperable E-commerce**
  DPI provides the backbone for inclusive, interoperable platforms that accelerate the growth of e-commerce, especially in developing and least developed countries.
- **Aligning with Global Development Agendas**
  DPI supports national and international goals by facilitating digital transformation in a way that is sustainable, scalable, and inclusive.

Mapping India's DPI to UN SDGs

DPI	Relevant SDGs
AADHAAR	SDG 16.9: Legal identity for all SDG 10: Reduce Inequality
UPI	SDG 8.10: Access to financial services SDG 9.C: Access to ICT
DigiLocker	SDG 9.C: Access to information and communications technology
ONDC (Open Network for Digital Commerce)	SDG 8: Decent Work & Economic Growth SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, Infrastructure SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

India’s Foundational DPI

Digital Identity

- Aadhaar’s interoperable architecture seamlessly integrates with banks, telecoms, government schemes, and private platforms to enable unified authentication and efficient data exchange.
- With over **1.4 billion** enrolments—covering **99%** of India’s adult population—Aadhaar powers the world’s largest digital identity network for streamlined service access.

Digital Payments

- UPI’s real-time, interoperable and modular architecture—built through public–private collaboration—has revolutionized payment flows for India’s SMEs.
- Transaction volumes jumped from 45.97 billion in FY 2021–22 to **131.16 billion** in **FY 2023–24**, reflecting a **69% CAGR**.
- In FY 2023–24, UPI accounted for roughly **70%** of all digital payment transactions in India.

Data Exchange

- India’s **Data Empowerment and Protection Architecture (DEPA)** framework aims to give individuals greater control over their personal data and how it is shared.
- It is a consent-based system where users can explicitly authorize the sharing of their data with specific entities, ensuring privacy and security.

DPIs enabling digital trade

BharatTradeNet

- India has announced the launch of Bharat Trade Net, to support the digitalization of trade documents, facilitate seamless data exchange, and improve transparency in trade finance mechanisms.

ONDC
Open Network for Digital Commerce

- Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) is democratizing digital markets in India by promoting open network built on **open-source protocols** that allows buyers and sellers to transact directly, **without being tied to any specific platform**.
- Facilitated over **150 mn transactions** growing from 1,000 monthly transactions in Jan 2023 to over **15.4 mn** transactions in Dec, 2024. It includes over **0.7 mn sellers and service providers** of which about **85%** are small businesses, generating **55% of all transactions.**
- It is aimed at diminishing reliance on monopolistic platforms and provide a level playing field for online sellers, buyers and service providers, especially MSMEs, fostering a competitive and inclusive digital commerce ecosystem.

DPI in India's G20 Presidency

The G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration, building on the consensus achieved in the Digital Economy Ministers' Meeting, welcomed the following:

- Through the **G20 Framework on Systems of DPI**, a collaborative framework for DPI, detailing its concept, components, and design principles
- The **Global Digital Public Infrastructure Repository** (**GDPIR**), as a mechanism for knowledge and discovery in DPI; GDPIR currently houses information on **54 DPI solutions** from **16 countries**
- A **multistakeholder initiative** for coordinated financing and technical support, to develop DPI in LMICs
- Published two reports on DPI –
  - **The DPI Approach: A Playbook**
  - **Compendium for Accelerating the SDGs through DPI**

Social Impact Fund for DPI Development

- Hon'ble Prime Minster of India announced creation of a **Social Impact Fund (SIF)** with an initial commitment of **USD25Mn** from India
- Once operationalised the fund will work towards financing DPI deployment in countries of the Global South

Global DPI Ecosystem

DPI is emerging as a foundational tool for sustainable and inclusive growth. With strong support from the UN, DPI has the potential to accelerate progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**) by promoting inclusive digital transformation and innovation.

- DPI has continued to be a Priority Area under the **Brazilian and South African G20 Presidencies**
- Discussed under **BRICS, Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), BIMSTEC, India-ASEAN** etc. forums
- **UN Secretary-General's Endorsement** (Sept 2023): DPI highlighted as a high-impact initiative crucial to advancing SDGs globally.
- **Summit of the Future** (Sept 22, 2024, New York): World leaders adopted the **Pact for the Future**, which includes the **Global Digital Compact (GDC)**. This compact identifies DPI and digital public goods as key drivers of inclusive digital growth and calls for increased investment and multi-stakeholder participation.
- **UNDP DPI Safeguards Report**: Published to outline guidelines ensuring safe, ethical, and effective DPI development and deployment.
- **Support from DPGA, World Bank etc.**: The Digital Public Goods Alliance (**DPGA**), World Bank and other eco-system players play pivotal roles in advocating for and promoting DPI worldwide

India's efforts towards implementation in third countries

International Cooperation through India Stack MoUs

- ✓ India signed **MoUs with various countries of Latin America, Africa, CIS, Caribbean and Asia,** to promote adoption of secure and interoperable DPI with other digital solutions
- ✓ Agreements include **tech expertise, policy guidance, and operational support**
- ✓ Aim: Help nations **build secure, inclusive digital infrastructure** through **knowledge transfer**

Global commitments supporting the sustainable development of DPI

Partner	Key Focus
India-US **2023**	U.S.–India Digital Development Partnership: Joint support for DPI in developing nations.
India-EU **2025**	Enhancing interoperability of DPI, promoting secure and privacy-preserving solutions.
India-France (Horizon 2047) **2023**	High-impact collaboration in mobility, commerce, and culture via open protocols.
QUAD **2024**	Supporting DPI for sustainable growth and inclusion in the Indo-Pacific.

Scaling DPI beyond borders

In support of this vision, India endeavours to pursue four major actions:

✓ Offer India's DPI solutions for digital transformation to other countries

✓ Provide implementation assistance to interested countries in partnership with other development partners

✓ Invite participation and contribution in the Social Impact Fund for DPI Development in the global south

✓ Encourage sharing of DPI solutions for inclusion in the Global DPI Repository to enable the sharing of knowledge and best practices

Enabling global Digital Trade: Way forward

- **At MC 13, WTO members, inter alia, decided to**:
  - re-invigorate the work under the WPEC with particular focus on its 'development dimension'.
  - explore how to level the playing field for developing and least-developed country Members to advance their digital industrialization.
  - engage to identify gaps in support of addressing the digital divide, including for MSME enterprises to realize the potential of the digital economy.
  - General Council to hold periodic reviews and present recommendations for 'action' to MC14

- Committee on Trade and Development mandated to examine challenges to and ways of enhancing participation of developing countries in e-commerce, in particular role of improved access to infrastructure and transfer of technology.

Call to WTO: Collaboration on addressing digital divide

- Urgent need for concrete 'action' at the WTO to address global digital divide in terms of access to infrastructure and technology
- Intensive discussions in GC and relevant bodies for identifying tangible 'deliverables' for MC 14 for this 'action' including through collaboration on DPIs for shared prosperity in digital trade

Thank You!