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India braces up for AI challenge, plans own LLM foundational model to rival ChatGPT, DeepSeek R1

Under the IndiaAI Mission, the government has also selected 18 application-level AI solutions for the first round of funding.

Written by [Soumyarendra Barik](#) [Follow](#)

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IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw made the remarks on Thursday. (Express Archives/Anil Sharma)

Days after an upstart Chinese artificial intelligence (AI) lab launched the low-cost foundational model **DeepSeek**, the Indian government has said it has decided to build a domestic large language model of its own as part of the Rs 10,370 crore **IndiaAI Mission**, IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said Thursday.

The government has also selected 10 companies that will supply 18,693 graphics processing units or GPUs — high end chips needed to develop machine learning tools that can go into developing a foundational model. The companies include the Hiranandani Group-backed Yotta, Jio Platforms, [Tata](#) Communications, E2E Networks, CMS Computers, Ctrls Datacenters, Locuz Enterprise Solutions, NxtGen Datacenter, Orient Technologies, and Vensysco Technologies. Nearly half of the total GPUs will come from Yotta alone, who has committed to offer 9,216 units.

“Over the last 1.5 years, our teams have been working closely with startups, researchers, professors etc. Today, we are calling for proposals to develop our own foundational model. The model will take care of the Indian context, languages, culture, are devoid of biases,” Vaishnaw told reporters.

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He said that the government is in touch with at least six developers for building the foundational model, which could take anywhere between 4-8 months. “We will have a world class foundational model in the next few months,” the minister said.

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He, however, did not specify how much it would cost to build the model, and the companies the government is currently in touch with.



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On helping procuring compute power, Vaishnaw said that of the 18,693 GPUs that have been approved to be empanelled, roughly 10,000 GPUs are ready to be installed today.

The government will launch a common compute facility, from where startups and researchers can access the computing power, in the next few days. The cost of accessing higher end GPUs would be Rs 150 per hour, and using lower end GPUs would cost Rs 115.85 per hour. To further ease access to these services, the government will give a 40 per cent subsidy to end users on the total price.

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“Globally, GPU access costs \$2.5-\$3 per hour. We are making it available, after the subsidy for around \$1 per hour,” Vaishnaw said.



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