

Dept. of Revenue computerisation project a bonanza for IT cos

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IT IS a bonanza which no computer company worth its name in India is willing to forgo.

The Department of Revenue is fully computerising Customs operations featuring electronic data interchange (EDI) in 20 different locations around the country.

The project would be worth around Rs 50 crore and would be one of the biggest computerisation programmes of the government.

The response from the corporates have been good.

The companies which are said to be vying with each other for the Rs 50 crore contract to computerise the Customs offices are TISL-IBM, Wipro, HCL-HP, Digital, CMC, Siemens, Tata Elxi and Tata Unisys among others.

The computerisation programme will be akin to the pilot project running at present in the Delhi air cargo customs centre.

The pilot project was bagged by HCL-HP which many feel may have that added advantage for bagging the rest of the contract.

The Department has already tendered for the project and is expected to shortlist the candidates soon. The final candidate is expected to be announced in about one months time.

The computerisation programme will include customs offices in air cargo terminals, sea ports and internal container depots, sources said. The areas which will be linked with the major metros and other seaports and ICDs from where exports and imports take place.

The performance of this computerisation programme has to be very high as any hitch in the working will hamper the whole import and export process in the country, sources said. It will have to be fail proof.

The computerisation featuring EDI will mean that the computer

can be linked to the computers in the offices of the importers and exporters and they can file the necessary papers for import or export sitting in their offices itself.

EDI, is a modern concept aimed at promoting paperless trading which is increasingly being adopted in many countries round the world.

The Customs department is among the other government organisations entering EDI.

Infact implementation of EDI in key departments connected with international trade such as Customs, Ports, Directorate General of Foreign Trade and airports Authority is being closely monitored and co-ordinated for effective use of EDI in international trade.

Putting this whole computerisation in place will benefit speedier clearance for exports and imports and thus the trade is expected to benefit from this move, sources said.