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Visa digitises major government service payments in Andhra Pradesh, to make Vizag a less-cash city

BY PRATIK BHAKTA, ET BUREAU | UPDATED: OCT 09, 2017, 05.09 PM IST

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MUMBAI: Global digital payments processing company [Visa](#) and the Government of Andhra Pradesh, enabled digital payments for various state owned service providers starting from bus rides to water tax payments under the [Vizag](#) Digital Dhan Sankalp (VDDS) project. Aimed at better service delivery, the digital payment services has been enabled for property and water tax payments at Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC), bus services run by [Andhra Pradesh](#) State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC), iconic tourist locations at Visakhapatnam Urban Development Authority (VUDA), and utility services of Eastern Power Distribution Company of AP Ltd (EPDCL).

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Further to these, Visa said that the digitisation of various other payments like educational institutions, small and micro merchants, and street market vendors is underway as the state government is considering mandating digital acceptance through amendments to the AP Shop and Establishments Act.

The big push towards digital payment of citizen-services is part of the vision of 'Vizag less-cash city' initiative underway between Visa and the state government of Andhra Pradesh that aims to offer efficient services through better adoption of digitization across the masses. Also for the first time, citizens in the state would be able to use their contactless cards to make payments digitally for services such as transportation and tourism.

"Having set the benchmark as the first state in India to embark on digitization of government services on such a large scale, we have further raised the bar by extending the project to cover electricity, municipal taxes, transport and tourism payments. Digitization of transactions will lead to a reduction of costs and improved convenience for all stakeholders involved, as we continue to realise our vision of making Vizag, India's first less-cash city and the FinTech Valley of India," said Lokesh Nara – IT Minister, Panchayati Raj and Rural Development, Government of Andhra Pradesh.

The Vizag Digital Dhan Sankalp project is an initiative spearheaded by the Government of Andhra Pradesh and Visa, to develop Visakhapatnam into India's first "less-cash" city. The project was facilitated through active participation by various banking and technology partners including Andhra Bank, Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Billdesk and Verifone. The program focuses on driving the digitization for a range of key use cases determined to significantly payment digitisation. Aimed at driving access, awareness and adoption of digital payments, the program focuses on changing consumer behaviour to increase the adoption of digital payments that will serve as the foundation for Vizag to emerge as India's Fintech Valley.



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"Digital transformation of payments will improve public service delivery by infusing more efficiency and transparency into the system. Today, what citizens want is a new type of experience: one that is frictionless, seamless and we are excited at the role that contactless technology such as Visa payWave cards can play in enabling citizens across the state. Digitization of payments will help re-imagining a smarter nation driven by the synergy between citizens and the state and roll out superior citizen experience rooted in transparency," said TR Ramachandran, Group Country Manager, Visa, India & South Asia.

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