Govt e-comm platform on-boarding unicorns

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New Delhi: Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), which was positioned as an UPI-type alternative to e-commerce giants, is on-boarding several unicorns including Makemytrip, Policybazaar, Cars24 and Zerodha, as it seeks to gain traction.

While the idea was to create ONDC as a tool for small businesses, including kirana stores and democratise online commerce, govt believes the entry of large players will only give more choice to consumers and help grow demand in smaller towns and cities. Besides, the idea is to allow consumers and businesses to benefit without having to pay levies and charges to platforms.

"It has started getting traction in the last two years. Five lakh sellers have on-boarded, of which 70% are small and medium sellers. In April, ONDC facilitated 72 million transactions," Rajesh Kumar Singh, secretary in the department for promotion of industry and internal trade, told reporters.

Asked if big startups may end up overshadowing smaller players, Singh said he expected all types of players to come on board. "The intent is noble, let us see how it works and to what extent we can actually crack some of the issues you raised in terms of market concentration," he said.

Over 125 ecosystem stakeholders, including unicorns such as EaseMyTrip, Winzo and Livspace signed Letter of Intent (LoI) on Friday.