Govt to bring in new plan to hasten safety approval for devices

India will try out a strategy of parallel testing to speed up safety approvals for new electronic devices, an industry group told *Reuters* on Friday, a move that could boost device launch plans by the likes of Samsung and Apple.

The move comes as India scrambles to remove bottlenecks faced by businesses, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi bullish on an electronics hardware manufacturing industry his government targets to be worth $300 billion by 2026.

The plan to test different components of the devices simultaneously looks set to cut as much as five to eight weeks from the 16 to 21 now often needed to test and certify products ranging from wireless earbuds to smartphones.

"For industry, it is directly linked with ease of doing business; for consumers, this will result in faster access to the latest products," the group, MAIT, said in its statement.

Firms such as Apple, Samsung and Xiaomi are among its members, along with global and domestic firms operating in India's electronics, telecom and IT sector.

To trim the time required, the group added, the testing agency, the Bureau of Indian Standards, "has agreed to a pilot project where some identified electronics hardware products shall be undergoing parallel testing".

Executives say India's cumbersome testing process can take 16 weeks for a new Apple AirPods model, for example, as the charging case and its components must first secure clearance before the earbuds are assessed. For a smartphone and its parts, the procedure could take an average of up to 21 weeks.

The pilot decision followed a closed-door meeting on Wednesday between officials of India's information technology ministry, BIS, MAIT and executives of firms such as Apple and Samsung, a source with direct knowledge of the matter said.

Apple, Samsung and Xiaomi did not immediately respond to requests for comment. **REUTERS**