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## TATAS NEAR IPHONE PLANT BUY

# Wistron, Apple to support in transition, plant ops for now

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The Tata group is close to acquiring Wistron's \$600-million factory in southern Karnataka by next month, according to media reports. The Wistron unit makes iPhones for the Cupertino-based company.

Sources said that Wistron will continue to provide the Tatas technical know-how on assembling the phone and keep back some personnel during the transition process.

Also, key Apple executives, for the time being, will be closely involved in the plant operation to ensure smooth assembly of phones. The Tata group and Apple did not respond to queries sent by *Business Standard*.

Commenting on the acquisition, Minister of State in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology Rajeev Chandrasekar tweeted, "Bringing national champions into global electronics value chain is a key policy objective of the Hon'ble PM @narendramodi's visionary PLI scheme."

He added that the news of Tata getting one step closer to making the iconic iPhone for



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the global markets is a positive development.

The Tatas already have tied up with Apple vendors to manufacture iPhone enclosures, which account for 9-12 per cent of the cost of production of an iPhone.

They are an important part of the Apples's quest for increasing value addition from 12-15 per cent to 30 per cent by FY26 as committed to the government.

However, despite a learning curve of 2-3 years to cut

rejection rates, the Tatas are already exporting the enclosures to markets like China.

Apart from others, Wistron has been assembling the latest model iPhone 14. But it is not clear whether Apple's upcoming phones, to be launched around September-October, will be made in the Karnataka factory.

Wistron has over 10,000 workers in the factory and, according to sources, has already invested ₹1,250 crore in the plant.