



DLI Scheme-backed Chip Design Startup - Aheesa Digital Innovations Achieved First-Pass Silicon Success With 'VIHAAN', a Broadband Chip Built Using the Indigenous VEGA Microprocessor

**VIHAAN Aims to Bring Fibre Broadband to Indian Homes and
Has Attracted VC Funding from the Tamil Nadu Infrastructure
Fund Management Corporation (TNIFMC) and Other
Investors**

**DLI Scheme-backed Companies Have Cumulatively Raised
Over \$100 Million in VC Funding and Achieved 35 Design
Tape-outs**

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Semiconductor chip design is a critical value driver across the semiconductor value chain, contributing up to 50% of overall value addition and accounting for approximately 15–35% of the Bill of Materials (BOM) cost of electronic products.

Recognising the pivotal role of semiconductor design in the country's strategic technological ambitions, the Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme is supporting Indian Startups for designing chips for a wide range of strategic and commercial applications. These include satellite communications, drones, surveillance cameras, Defence and Aerospace Systems, Automotive, Internet of Things (IoT) devices, LED drivers, AI systems, Telecom Equipment, and Smart Meters.

Aheesa Digital Innovations

Headquartered in Chennai, Aheesa is an Indian fabless semiconductor startup that designs chips for broadband networking and security. Taped out on Republic Day and achieving first-pass silicon success on Independence Day this year, 'VIHAAN' - a networking System-on-Chip (SoC) purpose-built for Fibre Broadband- will now proceed towards production tape-out, targeted for 2027.

As India expands its digital infrastructure through optical fibre, 5G, and broadband-led services, the need for domestically designed semiconductor solutions is growing. Aheesa, through its VIHAAN series, successive funding milestones, and active support from the DLI Scheme, is positioned to serve this need.

Investor Confidence - Supporting India's Deep-Tech Innovation to Scale Global Solutions

Earlier this year, Aheesa raised about ₹40 crore from TNIFMC through the Tamil Nadu Emerging Sector Seed Fund (TNESSF) and other private investors to accelerate product development and support the company's growth in the semiconductor space. These successive rounds of funding after approval under the DLI Scheme reflects growing confidence of investors in Aheesa's ability to deliver advanced broadband silicon solutions from India.

Government support helping Indian chip companies move from idea to product

Aheesa's achievement is part of a larger transformation taking place in India's semiconductor design ecosystem. Through the Government's semiconductor programmes, state-of-the-art chip-design tools made available to 455 organisations, including 350 academic institutions and 105 startups, enabling students, researchers and companies across the country to design chips.

Companies supported under the DLI Scheme have cumulatively achieved over 30 chip design tape-outs across various foundries and raised more than US\$100 million in VC funding, demonstrating growing investor confidence in India's semiconductor design capabilities. Under the Chips to Startup (C2S) Programme, 245 chip designs have been taped out by 71 academic institutions, to meet future workforce requirements.

Other recent successes under the Scheme

- 1. Vervesemi Microelectronics** achieved first-pass silicon success of BLDC Motor Controller chip using indigenous microprocessor by Incore Semiconductor and its Motor Driver chip.
- 2. Netrasemi** successfully tested 12nm Vision SoC with integrated video analytics acceleration.
- 3. OptoML** received its 12nm 'compute-in-memory' SoC, which makes AI processing faster and power-efficient.
- 4. Mindgrove Technologies** announced a partnership with PRAMA India to explore the usage of its Vision SoC in CCTV surveillance cameras.
- 5. IndieSemiC** secured global certification for its Bluetooth (BLE 6) chip module.

Building an Indian semiconductor ecosystem

The Government's semiconductor initiatives are aimed not merely at designing individual chips, but at building an ecosystem covering the entire semiconductor value chain — from chip design and manufacturing to advanced packaging, equipment, materials, research and development, and skilled manpower. With Semicon 2.0, approved with an outlay of ₹1,27,500 crore in July 2026, India is taking this effort to the next level, with the objective of building a globally competitive semiconductor ecosystem.

The progress of companies such as Aheesa Digital Innovations demonstrates that Indian semiconductor designs are increasingly moving beyond the laboratory. Chips designed in India are now being fabricated, tested, validated, and prepared for customer trials. As the ecosystem matures, silicon-validated designs will move towards volume manufacturing, positioning Indian companies as credible global suppliers while strengthening domestic supply chains and self-reliance.

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