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May 20, 2025

To,

**BSE Limited (“BSE”)**  
P.J. Towers, Dalal Street,  
Fort, Mumbai – 400 001

**Scrip Code: 544021**

**National Stock Exchange of India  
Limited**

Exchange Plaza, C-1, Block G,  
Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E),  
Mumbai – 400051, India

**Trading symbol: PROTEAN**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Subject: Transcript – Business Update Conference Call.**

Pursuant to Regulation 30 read with Schedule III and other applicable provisions of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, and in continuation to our letter dated May 19, 2025, please find enclosed herewith Transcript of Business Update Conference Call, held on Monday, May 19, 2025, in respect of business update regarding PAN 2.0 RFP.

This is for your information and records.

Thanking you,

Yours truly,

**For Protean eGov Technologies Limited**

**Maulesh Kantharia**  
**Company Secretary & Compliance Officer**  
**FCS 9637**

Encl.: As above



"Protean e-Governance Technologies Limited to Discuss Latest Business Development"

**May 19, 2025**



**MANAGEMENT:**

**MR. SURESH SETHI – MANAGING DIRECTOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

**MR. V. EASWARAN – CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER**

**MR. SANDEEP MANTRI – CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

**MR. BERTRAM D'SOUZA - CHIEF PRODUCTS & INNOVATION OFFICER**

**MS. PUSHPA MANI – VICE PRESIDENT & HEAD INVESTOR RELATIONS**

**Moderator:** Ladies and gentlemen, good day and welcome to the conference call hosted by Protean e-Governance Technologies Limited to discuss their latest Business Development.

As a reminder, all participant lines will be in the listen-only mode, and there will be an opportunity for you to ask questions after the presentation concludes. Should you need assistance during the conference call, please signal an operator by pressing '\*' then '0' on your touchtone phone. Please note that this conference is being recorded.

I now hand the conference over to Ms. Pushpa Mani – VP and Head IR from the company. Thank you and over to you, ma'am.

**Pushpa Mani:** Thanks, Michelle. Good afternoon everyone. Before we commence the call, please note that this call is solely to discuss the development pertaining to PAN 2.0 RFP. We have our quarter 4 investors' earnings call scheduled for Thursday and all the queries pertaining to results will be discussed there. If you have any queries unanswered during the call, you may reach out to us afterwards.

The Management on today's call would be represented by Mr. Suresh Sethi – MD and CEO; Mr. V. Easwaran – COO; Mr. Sandeep Mantri – CFO; Mr. Bertram D'Souza – Chief Products and Innovation Officer, and myself Ms. Pushpa Mani, Head Investor Relations.

Before we begin, I would like to mention that some of the statements in today's discussion may be forward-looking in nature, and we believe that the expectations contained in these statements are reasonable. However, these statements involve a number of risks and uncertainties that may lead to different results.

With this, I invite our MD, Mr. Suresh Sethi to address us all. Thank you and over to you, sir.

**Suresh Sethi:** Thank you, Pushpa. Good afternoon, everyone. We just wanted to take this opportunity to update you with regard to the update we had for the PAN 2.0 RFP, which had been put out by the Income Tax Department. Over the weekend, we received feedback that our current bid has been considered unfavorably at this stage. We have reached out to the tax department to seek further clarity. And while we are in the process of doing that, we wanted to just share with you that this is the status as of now.

With regard to the PAN RFP 2.0, as we have earlier mentioned, the RFP was with regard to design, development, integration and management of the tax ITD systems, which today we don't manage. This is a system which is used for allotment, updation, and correction of the PAN data, which is today run by the ITD Department. We currently have a mandate from IT Department with regard to the processing and issuance of PAN cards, primarily meaning that we collect the data from the individuals who are seeking a PAN card or any PAN card update and the same information is sent to the ITD Department for them to then do the allotment and issuance. And we, as of now, see a limited impact on that. And the RFP, as we see it, would anyway take around another couple of years for implementation. So currently, at present, we don't see any immediate operational impact on our current PAN business.

I would like to open it for questions with regard to this.

**Moderator:** Thank you very much, sir. We will now begin with the question-and-answer session. The first question is from the line of Prakash Kapadia from Spark PMS. Please go ahead.

**Prakash Kapadia:** Yes. Wanted to clarify, you mentioned in your opening remarks about the PAN 2.0 project. Is this right understanding that PAN 2 is more of an IT related project and the operational modalities currently which we are doing in terms of issuing PAN cards, dispatching PAN cards, is not part of the scope of work of PAN to refresh? Is that understanding, correct? And if not, then can you just highlight the difference as to what the scope of work is and how is it being currently done? That will help clear up a lot of doubts.

**Suresh Sethi:** Sure, Prakash, I will just give a little bit of background. We received the mandate for PAN issuance in 2002 - 2003. So, this mandate was given for relation of citizen data, which is towards application of the PAN card and then sharing it to the IT Department. The IT Department then does the allotment of the PAN card number, which means they do all the deduping of data and everything to ensure everybody has a unique card. And that works at the ITD end. The work that we do in line with the fact that this is a citizen-centric national ID. So, we have both channels today where we have a huge distribution network where we provide assisted services. We have a network of almost 4,00,000 agents across the country that any citizen can go and submit their PAN card application. And there are also today direct channels on which you can directly apply for a PAN

card. So, this is about processing of the PAN data and then getting the PAN card issued to you. The PAN 2.0 RFP is to do a tech revamp of that entire tech stack which ITD has. And that in a way is not directly linked to the entire distribution and application process for the PAN card. And therefore, we are saying that while it is a separate IT project, as of now as we see it, it does not impact the distribution and the processing part of it. Currently, almost three-fourths of our applications are today still processed in an assisted mode, which means somebody is using the help of an agent to be able to submit the application, which is passed on to the ITD Department. And that distribution is something which we today run as a multiple product distribution, and services being one of them. Does that answer the question to an extent?

**Prakash Kapadia:** Right. And, we have been hiring a lot of employees upfront to build execution capabilities. Obviously, this is across the line of businesses and multiple business revenues we have. So the employee cost and some of the increases which we have seen is, was an anticipation of this too also, means the PAN 2 coming to us because, we were pretty gung-ho and confident, given our leadership and whatever work we have done, we should be a very strong contender to the PAN 2 project. So, what I am trying to understand is, assuming there is no update, and it is awarded to somebody else, how will the cost shape up? How will margin shape up? And is there a cross utilization which we can do of employees and whatever costs we have built in?

**Suresh Sethi:** Prakash, PAN 2.0 is like a regular RFP. So, when we are bidding for RFPs, naturally we do the groundwork over there. But it is just like any other RFP. So, rest of the numbers, as we have been discussing, we will be sharing during the results. And we will provide more details. But with regard to RFP businesses, naturally we do not build up the full stack of new sources prior to the RFP mandates coming through.

**Prakash Kapadia:** Sure. I'll join back up the queue if I have more questions. Thank you.  
**Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Rohan Mandora from Equirus Securities. Please go ahead.

**Rohan Mandora:** Yes, good afternoon. Just want to understand, once PAN 2.0 goes live, you indicated three-fourths of the PAN applications come for the distribution network. So, the remaining one-fourth of the PAN applications will move to the new vendor. Is that understanding, correct?

- Suresh Sethi:** Rohan, that is a difficult one to predict. The PAN 2.0 RFP as and when it is mandated, there is a clear period of development and deployment of the tech stack. So, it will take 2 years. And at that stage, we will naturally have to see how many citizens are seeking assisted services, which means depending on an assisted agent to put the application across and how many would be going on to direct channels. Even as we speak today, we have direct channels. You can actually go to Protean website and directly apply for a PAN card. So, the direct channels are already available even as we speak. So, I think this is about citizen behavior and what sort of digital capability the citizens have and the comfort they have at that stage. So, it is difficult for me to predict what sort of distribution will be there between assisted applications and direct applications 2 years down the line.
- Rohan Mandora:** So direct would be with the new vendor. And on the assisted thing, if we were to look at the revenues, if 1/4 is participating in the assisted distribution of the PAN card and the PAN 2.0, out of the current top rate pool that 1/4 is getting, what would get shared with the new partners under in the assisted distribution thing? If it is Rs. 91 stays as it is, currently, as we understand, there's a certain payout that goes to the franchisees and the remaining difference is what Protean retains as software. So, with the new implementation partner in PAN 2.0 and with assistant distribution where Protean is helping, what kind of synergy would exist? What kind of profitability would get eroded?
- Suresh Sethi:** Rohan, it is difficult to predict 2 years down the line where things will stand. But I'll give a similar example. Today, when you look at UIDAI and issuance of Aadhaar cards, today Aadhaar cards are issued by multiple entities who have distribution networks. There is a revenue model on which they work when they issue the Aadhaar card. Similar indication is there even in this RFP that if somebody is seeking a physical PAN card, which today is almost 100% of the cases seeking a physical PAN card as we speak. There is a cost of Rs. 50 of issuance, which even the RFP mentions. But it is difficult to talk about revenue split down the line. I would sort of refrain from making a forward-looking statement or a judgment where it stands.
- Rohan Mandora:** But it would be better than some part of revenues would get split.
- Suresh Sethi:** My only point, my only fundamental point I am raising where there is probably clarity, we would like to provide that PAN 2.0 is primarily a tech stack revamp. That is why it's in the form of an RFP. The

business we run is for processing and issuance, which is a separate business. As and when the new tech stack gets deployed, there will naturally be interfaces which are there also today for direct applications which will come into play. But the current things as they stand, there are a majority of people seeking assisted support to apply for PAN cards. Two years down the line, we will have to see which way it plays, but there is no immediate impact on the business we will have.

**Rohan Mandora:** Got it. And on the PAN verification business that we do right now, after the PAN 2.0 goes live, what happens to that line of business?

**Suresh Sethi:** There is an indication in the RFP that the entire verification business will then run with the direct ITD Department. Currently, we provide those services at a very low margin to the market. And it's a very minuscule part of our revenues under the online PAN verification. And this is a business we actually club with our identity business because this is towards opening a bank account or authenticating a transaction or so on. And we club it with our eSign, eKYC and eAuthentication services. So, it's under that revenue line and it's a small component of that.

**Rohan Mandora:** Got it. And any reasons that we got to know why we were not considered for next round?

**Suresh Sethi:** We are seeking clarifications, as I mentioned. This came only over the weekend. As of now, we have requested clarification.

**Rohan Mandora:** Sure sir. Thanks a lot.

**Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Love Jain from Artha India Ventures. Please go ahead.

**Love Jain:** Hi, good afternoon. Thank you for the call. My question is on PAN 2.0 project. So, I can see that this is a one stop solution or platform where I can make the updates, corrections, other linkage reassurance and validation, all kinds of solution on the 2.0 project. If we haven't got the bid or haven't been selected, can the market share of this business can go down in Protean? Is there any clarification on that?

**Suresh Sethi:** Now again, as I mentioned, that ITD does that today also. So, all allotment, updation and correction in the PAN database is done by the ITD. We don't do that today as well. As I mentioned, we do the

processing and issuance of the PAN card, which means that we collate the data. So, when you are making an application, you naturally have to fill up the application and provide multiple details, including your ID details. And that is what we do today. That was the mandate given to us in 2002 - 2003. And today, as I mentioned, we collected this data. There are people who go to the agent and provide this information to the agent. Similarly, people have the ability to also take a non-paper journey, which means at the agent point, they can do e-sign and do everything without submitting any paperwork. So, all that work is done in a supported mode by the agent, or you are able to do it directly on the website. So, that is what we do. And 2.0 talks about the central system, the core which ITD runs today, on which they do the allotment and naturally any de-duping. If I already have a PAN card and apply a second time, you have to de-dupe the data. That is what ITD does. So, this tech revamping is for that stack which they are currently running, which we don't run today. So, these are two separate parts of the process, which are there. PAN 2.0 talks about the tech revamp of that core stack which ITD runs.

**Love Jain:**

And what if in future, if they include issuance and distribution in their one-stop solution, then it can be impacted? Or will they ask for a new bid in future if they come up with some alteration in the PAN 2.0 project?

**Suresh Sethi:**

It's difficult to predict what they will do, but as I was saying let me give another example today there are other national ID's like Aadhaar. UIDAI today does not have their own distribution points around the country. They leverage banks, they leverage the postal ecosystem. We as an organization were also earlier involved in issuance of Aadhaar cards, as one of the enrollment agencies. So, all the central government agencies actually leverage large-scale distribution networks to do this. As I mentioned, we today have 4,00,000 points of service at which we do the PAN card processing and collation of data. Very clearly, I don't expect ITD to set up their own distribution network. So, this will always be supported by distribution because ultimately, it's a citizen-centric service. And you have to provide equitable access and reach everybody.

**Love Jain:**

Okay, thank you.

**Moderator:**

Thank you. The next question is from the line of Pranav Gupta from Aionios Alpha Investment Managers. Please go ahead.



- Pranav Gupta:** Hi, good afternoon, sir. Just a clarification on one thing you mentioned earlier. You mentioned that in case the IT Department eventually decides to do the online bit of distribution themselves; would that get eventually move. Is that understanding, correct? That's obviously eventually when the time to...
- Suresh Sethi:** Just repeat yourself. I lost you. Just repeat it again please.
- Pranav Gupta:** So the question I was asking is that you mentioned in an earlier comment that once the PAN 2.0 framework is implemented, the online distribution or the mode of getting a PAN card that we currently have, then gets eventually moved to the IT Department. Is that understanding correct or did I sort of misinterpret what you said?
- Suresh Sethi:** No, let me reclarify it. Pranav, first of all, even as we speak today, IT Department does have an online site on which you can apply for a PAN card. So today, ITD, Protean, and UTIITSL are three entities, which have direct channels open also. With PAN 2.0, ITD will be offering the service online, but that they offer even today. That is the only correction I would make. So, the online channels are even there today as we speak.
- Pranav Gupta:** Okay, perfect. The second clarification, sir was that as I understood it earlier, and you can correct me if I am wrong, under the PAN 2.0 framework, there were certain changes that were going to be made in the PAN cards themselves in terms of the data that is sort of that verify PAN card. Is the understanding incorrect? Because you mentioned that it is primarily the revamping of the stack of ITD. That's what I understood from your comment.
- Suresh Sethi:** Yes, naturally, as technology is evolving, I am sure more data will be envisaged and that was part of the tech revamp also, that if we can add more features to the PAN card itself. But even today, if you see the PAN card does have a QR code on it. So, naturally as technology evolves and as this is getting deployed, there are definitely other areas in which you can further enhance the ID protocols over there. But yes, definitely there would be other features which could come down the line.
- Pranav Gupta:** Right. So just a last question in connection with that. So if there were new features that are going to be added to the PAN card, under the PAN 2.0 scheme eventually the current vendors, I mean, how would including you and UTIITSL, how would you sort of navigate through

the changed output that is required or will it then eventually move to the new vendor? That's what you are trying to understand.

**Suresh Sethi:** The point is the RFPs for the vendor who will develop the entire tech stack, do the design, the development, and the maintenance of it. Distribution is still something which is out there. So, there are two parts to your question. One is the entire work of first a citizen coming and applying for a PAN card, right? So, citizen applying and putting their application in is something which will be a widely distributed activity. Now when the PAN card is being issued, if there are new features in it, then we'll be issuing the new PAN card because when we started in 2002-2003, there was no QR code, for example. Then over a period of time, further features were put onto the PAN card, which is what we are issuing today. So, whoever is then doing the distribution will also get the ability to issue the new revised PAN card. Today, as you know, that whatever updates come into Aadhaar, ultimately, it's the same distribution network. UIDAI does not go out and do it themselves, right? Because last mile distribution and managing that, again, is left to the entities which are collecting the data and then issuing. So, I am saying the processing and issuance is separate from the tech stack revamp. I again reiterated that point.

**Love Jain:** Perfect. So that's very clear. Thank you so much.

**Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Mayank Babla from Enam AMC. Please go ahead.

**Mayank Babla:** So, thank you for all the clarification points. But just to get it more in black and white, what you are saying is that as it stands now, there is no greater impact to your existing services that you are providing under the PAN tax services basically.

**Suresh Sethi:** The answer is yes, because the part of business we do is processing issuance. As we see today, nothing has changed. Even the PAN RFP itself, the design development and deployment is indicated in the RFP will be a 2-year process. So, even when the new stack comes into play, it will be still 2 years down the line.

**Mayank Babla:** Got it. That was my only question. Thank you so much.

**Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Dhruv Shah from Dalal & Broacha. Please go ahead.

**Dhruv Shah:**

Hi, sir. Thank you so much for this opportunity. I just wanted to understand, currently in the last, if we take an average of last 3 years, what percentage of issuance and processing was with Protean? So basically you wanted to understand, I understand three-fourth of the people have been issuing these hard cards, but how has things been changing in the last 3 years and taking that into account when the PAN 2.0 gets implemented, do you believe that the same process and issuance business will be at a similar scale or that could trickle down a bit? And also in the PAN 2.0, if there is any modification, some modification work also comes to companies like Protean or will it go with the tech stack company?

**Suresh Sethi:**

Though we have multiple questions, so let me take them one by one. First of all, as we have already shared, we have a dominant share in the issuance of PAN. We have a 60% plus share in the cumulative PAN issuance till date. And we have been sharing our numbers, which you would see anyway in our quarterly results. As far as issuance is concerned, there is a part which is about processing of data or rather it starts with the citizen as a process. So, citizen applying for the PAN card will always be an activity which will be required because just the way you apply for Aadhaar, you apply for PAN. So that data collection and then putting the data and sharing with ITD for issuance will continue to be there. So that is where we were indicating that today also there are direct channels and there are assisted channels for doing it. That is an activity which will continue because ultimately you are providing a citizen service. And as far as trickle down is concerned, we have earlier also mentioned that today, seeing PAN is not a saturation ID like Aadhaar. Aadhaar we naturally say is something you would seek to have at the moment a child is born. PAN is usually done when people enter the workforce, your minors are becoming adults, you are opening your first bank account, which is when you are seeking a PAN card. So today if we look at overall demographics, the penetration of PAN is around 35% to 40% in the country. And every year a new workforce comes in. The requirement of PAN as an identity is also getting more widely applied. We have seen in the recent couple of years, the government for their welfare and benefits schemes, lot of schemes are now asking for a PAN. And we therefore see the propensity even in rural India where people are now applying for PAN cards so that they can qualify for welfare schemes. Similarly, the government has announced initiatives to say we want to make PAN a single identifier for all non-individual cases, which is for entities. Because entities don't have an equivalent of Aadhaar. But there are various initiatives in place which will mean

that more and more entities will seek PAN card, we don't see this trickling down. With a population like ours, today there are hardly 50 - 55 crore people who have a PAN card, and we are already a population of 1.4 billion. Therefore, we see this continuing and every year we have generally seen as a trend 6-7 crore new PAN card issuances.

**Dhruv Shah:**

So similarly, as currently we agree that we have 4,00,000 touch points but the way things changed in case of issuance of a passport, do you envisage that kind of a threat that could come in in case of PAN 2.0?

**Suresh Sethi:**

See, today, you are aware, Protean, we are working across multiple DPI's, right? We have been earlier focused largely on BFSI, which centers where you can, you know, process data for PAN issuance. Similarly, out of these 4,00,000 touch points, there are points serving our pension business. Similarly, as we are moving into agriculture, health, ONDC, which is digital commerce, open finance, we are leveraging the same ecosystem or providing citizen-centric services. So, for us, our distribution is a multi-product or multi-DPI distribution and is one service we provide over there. And most importantly, it ultimately depends on the citizen. If a citizen chooses to or feels that getting assisted at a touch point which is proximate to them is where they want to consume that service. This distribution will continue to be relevant. It will not be dependent on the core tech stack and what happens to it. It is where I want to apply for a PAN card which will be relevant to me as a citizen of India.

**Moderator:**

Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, due to time constraint, this will be the last question for today which is from the line of Ashish from Emkay Investment Managers Limited. Please go ahead.

**Ashish:**

Thank you, as you mentioned in your comment that mandate was issued by IDT for the existing PAN business. So just wanted to understand whether is it renewed yearly or like when was it last renewed and whether there is a possibility that the existing PAN business in future comes through an RFP route and not the mandate which is currently there.

**Suresh Sethi:**

Thank you. It was last renewed. I'll have to share the date with you. It was recently only. I don't have the date right now with me. If somebody in the room has the date, then please share it. Sandeep, if you guys are on the call. So, we will just share that. This contract for us has been reviewed every 3 to 4 years. It has been happening

right from 2003 onwards like this. I would naturally not make a forward-looking statement to say whether it will go down an RFP route down the line, but this is what has been happening in the past, which we can share with you with clarity.

**Moderator:** Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, as that was the last question for today, I will now hand the conference over to MD Sir for closing comments. Thank you and over to you, sir.

**Suresh Sethi:** Thank you very much. So, thank you, everyone, for patiently listening and asking all the questions. We just wanted to clarify the status. Just reiterating that PAN 2.0 is an RFP which is associated with the design, development, and deployment of the new tech stack for ITD from where they do the allotment, updation, and correction of the PAN in their database. On an immediate basis, we see very limited impact on our distribution business. Currently and going forward it is going to be driven by how citizens will be applying for the PAN cards. That is where we are today, we have a service network of almost 4,00,000 points. Largely that business will be driven by the citizens seeking services over there. So, I would not like to add anything further. We have already answered a lot of questions for requesting more details on this. So, thank you very much.

**Moderator:** Thank you, sir. Thank you, members of the management. On behalf of Protean e-Governance Technologies Limited, that concludes this conference. We thank you for joining us, and you may now disconnect your lines. Thank you.