



NEWS DIGEST

MEITY Chair on Internet Policy

ICRIER's Internet Policy News Digest is your fortnightly update on Indian and global developments in the digital economy, cyber-security, and Internet governance. This issue captures highlights from the first fortnight of 2019.

This year is set to witness both heightened contestations and deeper cooperation between various stakeholders in the Internet governance arena. Increased calls for international cooperation on internet policy issues from the past year are expected to crystallize and take shape. Resurgence of Net Neutrality debates are anticipated with California, a bellwether of the digital economy and the world's 'big tech' hub, awaiting the outcome of a lawsuit filed by Mozilla against the FCC over the proposed Net Neutrality Bill. Rising incidents of cybersecurity are set in the backdrop of an ambivalent global digital world order that remains polarized. Numerous multilateral and multistakeholder initiatives are likely to produce a plethora of perspectives often at odds with each other.

Closer home in India, the world's largest democracy is set to witness a national general election, and increasing regulatory tools being employed to control digital spaces. Following up on the work of the Justice Srikrishna Committee, the legislation setting up India's data protection regime is most eagerly awaited by stakeholders both in and outside of India.

These highlights and all archives for this news digest for 2018 are available at www.internetpolicy.in. Please email your valuable feedback and comments to internet.news@icrier.res.in.

GLOBAL

FireEye Intelligence reports a global wave of DNS hijacking currently underway

The agency reported a highly sophisticated hacking campaign that involved a suspected Iranian group redirecting traffic from companies all over the world through their own malicious servers. Affected organizations include ISPs, Internet infrastructure providers across Middle East, North Africa, Europe, and North America

Vietnam implements its harsh cybersecurity law, threatens to penalize Facebook for non-compliance

Civil society members in Vietnam, expressing concerns for free speech and cyber freedoms, argue that the cybersecurity law bears striking similarities to Chinese anti-cyber free speech

laws. Facebook stands in alleged violation of the law for allowing users to post “slanderous” content, and spread “anti-government” sentiment.

Congo shuts down its Internet ahead of Presidential election results

The shutdown heightened concerns of a fraud in a significant election that might witness a peaceful transfer of power after 17 years. The government said they were enforcing the shutdown to prevent spread of fake results online, to avert ‘chaos’ and a ‘popular uprising’.

Germany experiences largest ever data leaks involving personal data of hundreds of politicians

Lone student admits to dumping troves of information including email addresses, mobile numbers, and personal chat transcripts of Germany’s politicians, over a twitter account.

Intel reveals it has been working with Facebook on an AI ‘inference’ chip

Inference chips help in the process of taking an AI algorithm and putting it to use, for instance, by tagging friends in photos automatically. While Intel’s processors currently dominate the market for machine learning inference, it is set to face competition from Nvidia’s and Amazon’s recently launched inference chips.

Poland calls for joint EU-NATO stance on Huawei's market presence after its employee was arrested on charges of spying

The arrest deepens a growing mistrust towards Huawei, which, earlier, saw its employee arrested in Canada on charges of misleading banks on the company’s dealings in Iran.

85 instances of adware disguised as apps found on Google play, affecting 9 million users

The report finds that the adware is capable of displaying full-screen ads, monitoring screen unlocking functionality, and running in the mobile phone’s background. The apps, which were reportedly downloaded a total of 9 million times around the world, have now been suspended by Google after verifying the report.

Banks and Governments are testing quantum key distribution technology for cyber-security

Fiber optic cables run the risk of getting physically tapped and intercepted. The Quantum Key Distribution technology uses lasers to fire data in weak pulses of light that are only slightly bigger than a photon, such that, users are immediately notified if data transmitted through fiber are intercepted.

INDIA

Supreme Court seeks response from Center to a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed against MHA ‘snooping’ order

A PIL filed against the Ministry of Home Affairs’ notification authorizing 10 central agencies to intercept, monitor and decrypt any computer system, received a nod from the Supreme Court. The Central government now has six weeks to respond to the PIL.

Server sales in India take a hit as IT firms shift to the cloud

IDC reports that the overall server market in India shrank 8.1% in the last quarter of 2018. For the first time, IDC claims, the x86 server market, often used by IT services firms to host applications on campuses, has contracted.

Indian patents are the second highest contributors to IBM’s record number of patents earned in 2018

IBM investors in India earned 800 patents of the 9100 patents earned by the company, globally. 8500 IBM inventors across 47 US states and 49 countries received more than 2000 cloud computing patents, and over 1600 patents on AI.

SEBI mandates strict cyber security framework for mutual funds and asset management companies

The new norms, effective from 1st of April, 2019, require said companies to submit quarterly reports on cyber-attack threats and measures taken to mitigate threat vulnerabilities.

Wireline broadband pricing likely to fall by 50%, generate 80,000 crore over five years

The ratings agency ICRA reports that higher competition and trends towards bundling plans is expected to drastically reduce wireline broadband prices. With the growth of the broadband subscriber base to 100 million households in the next five years, revenues can expand to Rs. 80,000 crores, from the current Rs. 14, 500 crores.

State saves Rs. 12000 crore in farm loan waiver due to digital platforms, claims Maharashtra CM

The state announced a farm loan waiver in 2017, worth Rs. 34,022 crores, relieving each farmer with a debt of up to Rs. 1.5 lakh. However, no further details were provided by the CM, who stated his plans to further deepen 'Maha Net', a part of the Bharat Net initiative.

EY-IBM collaboration launches advanced cyber security operations in India

The center is equipped with IBM's QRadar platform for threat detection. The center aims to capture the rising demand for cyber security across Indian organizations, 77% of which in 2018 were revamping their cybersecurity architecture, according to EY Global Information Security Survey.

We'd love for you to spread the word! Do share contact details of those who may be interested in receiving ICRIER's newsletter, publications and notices regarding seminars, workshops, conferences, etc.

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