NEWS DIGEST
MEITY Chair on Internet Policy

ICRIER's Internet Policy News Digest is your update on Indian and global developments in cyber-security, digital economy, and Internet governance. We have recently re-designed the news digest to include opinion pieces covering issues both global as well as focused on India. We sincerely welcome your valuable feedback and comments at www.internetpolicy.in. Please email your valuable feedback and comments to internet.news@icrier.res.in.

GLOBAL

In a *Brink* op-ed, Wolfgang Kleinwachter explores a hotly contested question in the global internet policy discourse: Will new digital nationalism lead to internet fragmentation? He warns of a risk of digital unilateralism that can trigger the weaponisation of cyberspace, digital trade wars and massive violation of human rights online. Meanwhile, David Lyon and Colin Benett, writing for The Conversation, illuminate the role of massive voter relationship management platforms in interference and disruption through the misuse and abuse of personal data. This is largely achieved using digital campaigning practices to leverage the power of social media, mobile apps, geo-targeting and artificial intelligence. Further, China is relying on 5G socialism in a push to lead global tech race, banking on the might of the one-party state. It is making sure that its state-run carriers have access to cheap airwaves and fast, inexpensive approvals for putting up the hundreds of thousands of base stations the fastest wireless technology requires.

Brian Barrett decodes the futility of opt-out mechanisms in the context of Apple's commitment to eventually give users control over whether their Siri data gets sent to third-party eavesdroppers. However, this leaves it unclear whether that consent will be opt-in or opt-out. He notes that 'opt-out' gives big tech plausible deniability for the rampant hoovering of personal information and allows them to implicitly blame the victim when they overreach. Scotty Hendricks explores whether Facebook be regulated with laws instead of fines. Even as Facebook introduces a new third-party commission to oversee new privacy decisions, this won't cause any fundamental change in how they go about collecting personal data and selling it to advertisers.

People are becoming more reluctant to share personal data, survey reveals
A new report suggests Americans are increasingly less likely to share their data with companies. Results of a 1,000-person survey found that U.S. consumers are less likely in 2019 to share personal information than they were in a previous study conducted a year ago. That includes some of the most basic personal information.

Google halts Assistant speech data transcription in EU

Google has given reassurances that it won't make transcripts of speech data picked up by its Google Assistant system in the European Union for at least the next three months, said a German data-protection authority. Google acknowledged its contractors are able to listen to recordings of what people tell Google Assistant after some Dutch-language recordings were leaked.

Apple to restrict Facebook's messaging apps feature: Report
Apple is making a change to its mobile operating system that will restrict a feature that apps like Facebook's Messenger and WhatsApp use to make voice calls over the internet. The calling feature in the apps runs in the background even when not in use, which means the apps can connect calls faster while performing other tasks such as data collection, according to the report.

Twitter may have shared your data with ad partners without consent
Twitter says it recently found issues with how it adheres to user privacy settings and that it may have inadvertently shared user data with third parties. The microblogging network said in a company blog post Tuesday that it may have shared certain data even though you didn't give it permission to do so.

Businesses race to keep data flowing under a no-deal Brexit
Heightening fears of a hard Brexit on October 31 now have companies racing to implement back-up mechanisms that some industry experts say they probably never counted on needing. In Britain, government departments, including some in the National Health Service, are repatriating their data - such as personal data about citizens - to the UK from places such as Ireland.

Facebook facing lawsuit for illegal collection of biometric data of millions of users
A federal appeals court on Thursday rejected Facebook Inc's effort to undo a class action lawsuit claiming that it illegally collected and stored biometric data for millions of users without their consent. It came as the social media company faces broad criticism from lawmakers and regulators over its privacy practices.

INDIA

Payel M Upreti, in an op-ed for *The Hindu Business Line*, adds a word of caution about the central government's plans to enact the DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill in this parliamentary session. This Bill seeks to create a national DNA data bank, and regional data banks, and have separate indexes for crime records such as crime scene, under-trials, suspects, missing persons and unknown deceased persons. Prasanna Mohanta, writing for Business Today, mirrors this view, noting that the lack of privacy and data protection laws in India - in spite of years of debate and misgivings over Aadhaar biometrics and Supreme Court's order declaring privacy a fundamental right - heightens the fear of further enabling a surveillance state through DNA profiling of citizens.

Prateek Waghre poses the question why we need to ask who owns our data in the *Deccan Herald*. He also discusses privacy advocates' discomfort with the 2019 Economic Survey's viewpoint that data should be treated as a public good since it is non-rivalrous and private investment will not naturally gravitate towards uses that will drive social/societal welfare without accompanying profits. A publication by the World Bank catalogued the knowledge exchanges between Morocco and India to learn about India's digital ID system (Aadhaar) and the broader India Stack, including adapting these experiences to Morocco's context. This will enable the realisation of a new digital ID and will underpin efforts to reform the country's social safety net system and to introduce presence-less, paper-less and cash-less transactions.

'Critical' data list will be revised with time; move may trouble companies
The list of 'critical' data that has to be processed and stored only in India will be updated from time to time based on new technology developments, according to officials. The first critical data list will be notified by the yet-to-be-formed Data Protection Authority after thorough consultations once the Personal Data Protection Bill is passed in Parliament.

Supreme Court asks RBI to confirm WhatsApp's compliance with local data rules

The Supreme Court of India has given the central bank six weeks to report on whether WhatsApp had complied with data localisation. Foreign payment companies were caught off guard last year by the RBI's directive that said all payments data should be stored 'only in India' for 'unfettered supervisory access'.

NTT Communications reveals undersea cable networks to India in its pipeline
Japan-based NTT Communications is reportedly making plans to extend its undersea cable network to India in a bid to offer broadband services. However, the company did not make any reference to the exact time frame to which the undersea cable will make its official appearance in India.

India ranked highest in IoT cybersecurity attacks last quarter: report
With 22 per cent jump in cyberattacks on Internet of Things (IoT) deployments in the country, India was the most attacked nation in the IoT space last quarter, said a new report released by Indian digital services firm Subex. This was the second consecutive quarter that the country topped the cyber-attack victims list.

RBI sets norms to build regulatory sandbox for innovation in fintech
The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released the final framework for setting up a regulatory sandbox to enable innovations in financial technology. The Indian banking regulator, however, left cypto currency out of the list. Credit registry, credit information, Initial Coin Offering (ICO) and chain marketing have also been kept out of the sandbox.

GoDaddy survey shows Indian entrepreneurs and SME owners more inclined towards building an online presence, than global counterparts
According to the survey, almost one-third (32%) of the total Indian small businesses surveyed (that are online) reported that they already have a website and about 19% responded that they plan to build a website soon as compared to only 16% of their global counterparts.

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