DIGITAL CITIZEN SUMMIT

INFORMATION DISORDERS:
DISRUPTING DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

EVENT REPORT 2018

Digital Citizen Summit 2018

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Information Disorders:
Disrupting Digital Citizenship

Digital Citizen Summit 2018: Event Report

Curated by **Anulekha Nandi**

Reviewed by **Ritu Srivastava & Osama Manzar**

Designed by **Vimal Pawar**

Photos by **Jason Vaz**

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Contact

Digital Empowerment Foundation

House No. 44, 2nd & 3rd Floor (Next to Naraina IIT Academy)

Kalu Sarai, (Near IIT Flyover), New Delhi – 110016

Tel: 91-11-42233100 / Fax: 91-11-26532787

Email: def@defindia.net | URL: www.defindia.org

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INTRODUCTION

India and other South Asian countries have made leapfrogs in technology and its adoption in the recent years. However, technological proliferation has led to a disturbing trend towards mass surveillance by government agencies, the invasion of privacy, and acts to curb free speech online. The Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) had organized the first Digital Citizen Summit (DCS) on 11 November 2016 to address these issues. The key objective of the summit was to generate actionable policy-based recommendations and lay down steps to promote human rights online.

Taking this initiative forward, DEF and the Internet Society (ISOC) organized the third Digital Citizen Summit from 1-2 November 2018 at India International Centre in New Delhi with the support from Mozilla and UNESCO.

The aim of DCS 2018 was to facilitate a truly multilateral summit by inviting all stakeholder groups to participate. This time, the objective was to find a solution to bridge the digital divide, find ways to extending access to information for the underserved, and create a platform for youth, women and social media enthusiasts to raise awareness about internet rights, digital literacy, and digital security. In order to better explore the issues and ramifications underlying the objectives behind DCS, the summit was divided in six themes: Access and inclusion; Internet freedom and civil liberties; Data privacy, encryption, and security; Feminist internet; Online media, misinformation and fake news; and Digital citizenship and accountability.

This year, more than 200 participants attended DCS and took part in more than 20 sessions. The summit saw participation from scholars, researchers, academics, civil society organizations, and government representatives through paper presentation, session participation, conducting workshops and demonstrations, and attending the summit.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

» Digital infrastructure at the lower end of the pyramid needs to be strengthened for it to be a tool for empowerment.

» Unlike mobile voice penetration, Internet needs an entire ecosystem to take off.

» The problem of misinformation is both socially and technologically driven, and we need solutions at both end.

» Anonymity on the Internet allows people to say or act in a manner they would not otherwise in an offline space.

» We need to see our data not as oil but as an extension of our body to understand the importance of data privacy.

» It is important for LGBTQ+ people to get online to be visible and accepted. However, it is equally important for the platforms and the existing users to make the Internet a safe space for the LGBTQ+

» There have been several instances where we have seen simply collecting digital signatures, making missed calls and sending text messages have turned into game changing campaigns.

INFORMATION DISORDERS: DISRUPTING DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

DCS 2018 was built around the broader discourse of how the complex digital ecosystem impacts rights of individuals and structures their identity. The key challenges of privacy, surveillance, intimidation, censorship, and misinformation emerging within the online environment reveal the underside of a hyper-connected world while half the population continues to be lack the basic access to such resources.

The theme of the inaugural session, 'Information Disorders: Disrupting Digital Citizenship' aims to understand the dynamics of this paradox where information as empowerment gets transmuted into information as endangerment. The inaugural attempts to set the tone for the summit in order to understand the digital landscape, both its emancipatory potential and its challenges of inclusive development and progress. The themes for this year's Summit are Access and Inclusion; Online Media, Misinformation and Fake News; Internet Freedom and Civil Liberties; Data Privacy, Encryption, and Security; Feminist Internet; and Digital Citizenship and Accountability. The themes are designed to traverse the gamut of existing and emergent issues within the digital domain ranging from access to technology and infrastructure, the norms and principles of human rights underlying digital practice, as well as their relevance to global policy level issues.

The inaugural session was moderated by South Asia Editor for Asia Times, Saikat Datta, who opened the house by underlining the impact of technology on productivity while reducing the number of jobs, engaged the panelists in a discussion on priorities when it comes to the Internet.

Joining Datta on the panel were Regional Director (Asia-Pacific) at the Internet Society Rajnesh Singh, Adviser for Communication and Information (South Asia) Al-Amin Yusuph, Founder-Director of Internet Democracy Project Dr. Anja Kovacs, Executive Director at Internet Freedom Project Apar Gupta, Executive Director at the Secretariat of the High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation Amandeep Gill, Founder Director of Digital Empowerment Foundation Osama Manzar.

Welcoming the audience, Manzar noted, "A few years ago, we would have never thought of information disorder. In the last couple of decades, we have come from ICT4D to digital revolution and information society. Then we moved into the area of mobile revolution, which is touching everybody's lives. In the last five years, we have started talking about privacy and security much more than we ever did; and the words misinformation and fake news have never been used as much as they have in the last few years. However, we must understand that while we're talking about these issues of the Internet world, half the world is still unconnected. In a country like India, where 70% of the population is offline, how do we tackle the disorder that 30% of the country's population is exposed to when the rest do not even have access to information?"

Seconding Manzar's thought, Gill, who had joined the summit via Skype from Geneva, elaborated, "While half the world does not

have access to the Internet, there are those who have the access but may not have pertinent content accessible to them due to the barriers of language or agency of developing content. Then there is the issue of vulnerabilities in small, marginalized, and developing countries. There is an emerging dynamic around trying to understand inclusiveness through innovation and access gaps where inequalities are coming in. We need greater participation for digital equalities. Risk (issue of elite countries and communities), access (people struggling for basic rights), rights-based approach and the agency of content — all of these issues need to be addresses with equal priority."

AGENCY OF CONTENT

Reminding people of the agency of developing content, Gill added, "Halloween is increasingly being celebrated by afflu-ent children of South Delhi, however, the day has no cultural context for them. This is because of the over-representation of one culture over the other." This becomes extremely pertinent for a country like India where languages, culture and traditions changes every few miles.

Reflecting on overrepresentation of one culture over the idea, the panelists agreed that the Internet is making humans the sum total of their data, which is being controlled by someone else. "So where should the data reside, according to the rights perspective?", Datta asked.

"Access in itself has no value, the question is access to what. There is so little agreement on the topic of data. Should consent be part of the framework? But what is data? If you look at the Data Protection Bill, it views data as a resource or oil, which is up for grabs. It's pretty similar to how western countries used to think of colonization. Data is there to be mined and exploited. However, the Internet Democracy Project looks at data as an extension of your body," said Anja.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANATGES OF DATA MIN-ING

Sharing examples from the country where PDS (Public Distri-bution System) shop owners have refused to give ration to fam-ilies they've known for 30 years simply because the biometric verification failed, Anja lamented that data has become a matter of life and death for many ever since it has become a resource. "Recent Supreme Court judgments have been brilliant, they support privacy of data and privacy of body," she added. "But, on the other hand, Facebook can actually see when a person is depressed and who is more likely to commit suicide. It uses this data to share tips. But when I heard this, I was completely freaked out. It's helpful for people who may commit suicide, but they are also collecting data on companies and spaces that are more depression-prone. That's a lot of data that is being collected. They are profiling spaces and places."

While agreeing to the issues of profiling, Yusuph also believes data and AI is able to make systems respond. "But we have a serious problem when it comes to linguistic diversity. In the last 50 years, India has lost 550 languages, which means those

languages will not feature into future technologies. If you look at the data we have today, Hindi has got less than 1 per cent representation on the Internet. There are so many scripts that need to be recognized. There are so many languages where we don't have OCR (Optical Character Recognition) technologies. Even if you have text in those languages, there is no way you can have computer systems read them. This will lead to further exclusion of communities. The only solution is to encourage states to invest more into resource languages and make sure the linguistic diversity gap is closed."

This linguistic gap is evidently visible in India where 70 per cent of the unconnected lives in rural India and lack understanding of the English language, the dominating language of the Internet. But every new mobile phone connection, every new technology, is a building block in the changing economy.

"Are you seeing a monopolization of data? Is that a function of economic power because tech leads to better economy?" Datta asked.

DIGITAL READINESS OF DIGITAL INDIA

Responding to his question, Singh raised his concerns. "Every country in the world wants to go 'digital' but not every country is embracing it in the same way nor do they have social and economic capabilities to leverage it. What a person can do with a phone in Korea is very different what a person can do in India. Depending on what part of the world you're in, 4G data could be 250 kbps or it could be 10 mbps. The digital divide is large and varied in India, which is not getting better but only getting worse. Then there is the issue of data monopolization. There are a lot of countries that have gone ahead and built stuff, they release things for people who don't realize what they're giving up in exchange. Some companies have totally monopolized data. The amount of data they hold, across countries and social or economic classes, is massive. They can see what you do, how you do and when you do. When there is so much information floating around, how do you use the collected information is quite important. There have to be clear guidelines on collecting and using data. At present, there is no harmonisation across the globe on how companies treat data. There are some data protection laws in the US, India has none, and Europe has stronger laws under GDPR."

There is also some responsibility that lies with the users. He added, "With access to the Internet, people have access to information. Everyone who is online can consume or produce content, so the only way you can control the masses is through misinformation. Hence, we should be using critical thinking. If someone shares something with you, don't believe it, question it. You have a brain machine. Use it."

ACCESS AND INCLUSION

This theme aimed to move beyond the concept of access as ownership and use of technology. It was an attempt to broaden the understanding of access into how technological affordances and inclusive spaces online can foster better participation of individuals in daily social and democratic life. The theme encompassed sessions on how an enabling environment can harness technology to make physical spaces more accessible and inclusive of the disabled and how assistive technology can provide them with the much needed independence. However, as other brought to light, barriers to inclusivity are not just infrastructural. They follow the fault lines of language, gender, affordability, and age and the ability of normative spaces to comprehend the specific constraints faced by those at the margins.

SESSIONS:

» I can't use this app: Closing the web accessibility gap by Point of View

» Libre digital library: Eliminating digital divide by Project Vidyalaya and Free Software Foundation

» Access and inclusion in the Global South: How are we doing by LirneAsia

» Concrete and effective e-governance by NIC, Akola

» Technology making aspirations a reality by SCORE Foundation

» Empowering the digital inclusion through language, disability and infrastructure impediments by ISOC

» New models of reaching LGBTIQ+ by MAMTA Institute for Mother and Child, the Humsafar Trust, and SAATHI

I can't use this app: Closing the web accessibility gap by Point of View discussed how options before a disabled individual have always been limited. Very few restaurants and public spaces are disabled friendly. Though technology can increasingly help people with locomotive disability, affordability was a key constraint in it trickling down to the grassroots level. Moreover, one of the biggest challenges faced by the community related to access to information. Though softwares have increasingly started incorporating assistive technology to an extent, not every software is equipped likewise. The IRCTC website was prone to cause a lot of hurdles for a visually challenged user since its captcha was not clear in audio format and it took a long wait and a judicial intervention to finally make the site accessible. Further, neither are the safety apps designed to cater effectively to individuals from the community. A systematic lack of policy, mandatory laws, and a systematic lack of ignorance, awareness, sensitivity and implementation are major causes of barriers of active participation by the community in public life.

PRACTICE LEARNINGS:

Nipun Malhotra (Nipman Foundation) began working with Zomato to map out restaurant with wheelchair access and started 'Wheels for Life' to connect people willing to donate wheelchairs to those in need. The initiative has managed to donate over a 1000 wheelchairs in over 21 states.

Dependra Manocha (Saksham) ensured that the movies Andhadhun and Sanju were released in their audio versions as well.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Develop policies, regulations, and laws for making public spaces more inclusive.

Develop better inclusive and assistive technologies.

Moderator: *Surabhi Srivastava (Love Matters India)*

Speakers: *Nidhi Goyal (Point of View); Nipun Malhotra (Nipman Foundation); Dipendra Manocha (Saksham).*

Libre Digital Library's project has successfully installed 20 thousand e-books in a local Tamil college. The idea was to take content on the Internet to people rather than wait for Internet to reach people, thereby precluding a need for connection to access content. Project Vidyalaya is trying to help schools and colleges to adopt FOSS, by installing master networks chains, to enable faster and cheaper FOSS integration.

Libre Digital Library and Project Vidyalaya, keeping their future trajectory in mind, are planning to merge their products with a hope to lead to platform inclusion, decentralised distribution of knowledge and enabling free access to FOSS to all stake holders

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Infrastructure in itself is not enough neither is diversity in languages

While the government has helped to build ICT facilities and FOSS operating systems in schools and colleges, migration from proprietary systems to FOSS is a costly and a time consuming process.

Speakers: *Ruchika BN (Project Vidyalaya); Ramaseshan S. (Project Vidyalaya); Vignesh (Libre Digital Library)*

Libre digital library: Eliminating digital divide by Project Vidyalaya and Free Software Foundation discussed the democratized potential of free and open source software and how educational institutions can be used to anchor and harness it. Broadly speaking, Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) pivots around right to modify; right to use; right to read and right to understand. In today's discussion of access and inclusion, it is imperative to for all industries to adopt FOSS. According to statistics, India is home to the second largest Internet user base, but contrastingly the Internet penetration is only at 29.55 per cent. While on one hand 70 per cent of the youth use technology, only 14.11 per cent of government schools have access to computers. Currently, there are many challenges to technology inclusion. These range from lack of adequate resources; cost, maintenance and supporting proprietary software to avoid pirated downloads; diversity of tools; reproducible infrastructure. While the government has helped to build ICT facilities and FOSS operating systems in schools and colleges, but the adaption is costly as the migration from proprietary systems to FOSS systems is a costly and a time consuming process. Further resources must be translated and made available in local languages.

Access and inclusion in the Global South: How are we doing by LirneAsia ICT and access come with urban-rural and gender divide. The divide between urban and rural connectivity is 22% and 46% women are less likely to own a mobile than men. In terms of connectivity, the income divide between high-income and low-income is 29%. The smartphone penetration is only 28% with only 35% people aware about Internet and only 40% urban rural people using the Internet. Only 19% of people falling in the age group of 15-65 years use Internet. To address the issue of digital divide, only focusing on numbers will not help to resolve the issues and address the gaps; research on social and cultural issues are equally important. This will help to capture the gaps, responsibilities, threats, challenges, and social norms that constitute the digital divide.
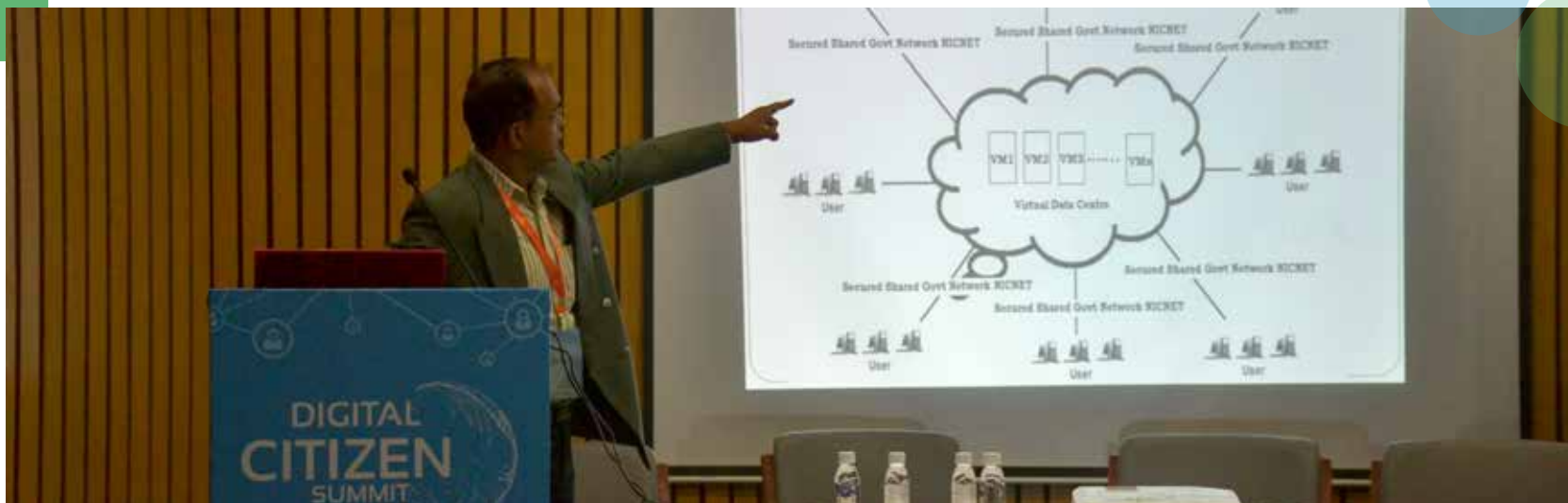
Concrete and effective e-governance by NIC, Akola highlighted that the type of technology does not matter as much as how that technology is used to find solutions. Outlining the steps towards effective e-governance and its different frameworks, the session discussed how important it was to maintain proper record of essential utilities like water and electricity in order to avoid theft and leakage.

Speaker: *Nitin Vishnu Choudhari (National Informatics Centre, Akola)*

PRACTICE LEARNINGS:

Online libraries for the visually blind – Bookshare and Sugamya Pustakalaya

An app named View AI, recognizes colour, text, currency note, all this without clicking photographs

Excel cinema app gives narrative of movies for visually impaired people

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Digital technology should be in compliance with international guidelines and implementers needs to be conscious of the needs, requirements, and aspirations of visually impaired people so it is of maximum use.

Speakers: *George Abraham (Score Foundation); Pranav Lal (Corporate Executive); Dr. Homiyar Mobedji (Benetech); Prashant Ranjan Verma (National Association for the Blind)*

Technology making aspirations a reality by SCORE Foundation discussed the role of assistive technology in empowerment of visually impaired individuals. 20% of world's blind are in India with one in fifth Indian being blind. In India, 5000 movies are produced in 35 regional language every year but not one for the enjoyment for blind people. Though technology holds the promise of huge transformation for visually impaired people, there is also a danger of digital divide in terms of access to digital infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

While the government understands that web must become accessible, it also must connect accessibility to technology and education.

Capacity building, expanding safety and making the space inclusive and equal for women and all other genders is crucial.

Moderator: *Dr. Govind (Internet Governance expert)*

Speakers: *Shilpi Kapoor (Barrier Break); Mithun Das (Reverie Language Technology); Rajesh Kumar Singh (Department of Telecommunications, Government of India); Amrita Choudhury (CCAOI).*

Empowering the digital inclusion through language, disability and infrastructure impediments by ISOC explored the phenomenon of access curtailed by impediments and barriers. It is important to understand that merely access to Internet services cannot result in development. The discourse on the Internet should encompass affordability, privacy, and language availability which should be considered integral parts of the discussion. Stakeholders should also consider development of skills as imperative. Internet must extend to becoming a safe space for taking calculative and informed risks. Over 70% of new users are stepping away from using the Internet due to the lack of content available online that specifically caters to them. It is important to enable the non-English speaking users to use Internet at the same speed as English speaking users. In order to make the Internet an inclusive space, the example of Bharat.net was cited as a local language domain which was started to make Indian innovation and entrepreneurship available in Hindi and other languages. There was also a need to expand on the vision to strengthen the Internet access and infrastructure especially in two and three tier cities.

New models of reaching LGBTIQ+ by MAMTA Institute for Mother and Child, the Humsafar Trust, and SAATHI discussed how digital technologies can be useful in reaching high-risk and marginalised communities for essential services like health and providing access to information about rights and entitlements. Digital media also helps in awareness-raising, sensitisation, and health inclusion. It also provides safe spaces for the community to have conversations and foster solidarity.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is important to continue to engage with barriers confronting the community and their full public participation beyond the abolition of section 377

SPEAKERS:

Amrita Sarkar (SAATHII); Yashwinder Singh (Humsafar Trust); Ramkali (Basera Samajik Sansthan), Sumit Basu (MAMTA); Leena Uppal (MAMTA), Vinayakan E.K. (MAMTA)

ONLINE MEDIA, MISINFORMATION AND FAKE NEWS

Online media has transformed the way we consume and produce news and information. In the past few years we have seen the polarization of politics and opinions, growing intolerance and the proliferation of fake news and misinformation in the media ecosystem. This theme dealt with what can we do to deal with this growing threat to democracy.

SESSIONS:

» Mainstream media's reportage of gender based violence: How to implement gender-sensitive and ethical journalism by Feminism in India (FII)

» How to survive in a post-truth world by On Purpose Consulting

» Internet and civil liberties by Sanjukta Basu

Mainstream media's reportage of gender based violence: How to implement gender-sensitive and ethical journalism by Feminism in India (FII) started with the discussion about how the media reports gender based violence (GBV) and how the way GBV is reported tweaks our understanding of the situation. A news article has many components, it is broken into headlines, images and content, which is a part of the design for readers and viewers to perceive. When it comes to images that are supporting the text it is often that of women covering their faces, helpless, shrinking, weak, submissive, etc. This reinforces victimisation in the viewers. This also somewhere shows that sexual violence needs to be hidden otherwise it will bring shame. The following guidelines were discussed as ethical reporting:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Rape is not an isolated problem, it is a systemic problem which should be highlighted

It is important to discuss that women are unsafe in public spaces and as well as in their homes by presenting the statistics

Reporting should not show just one side of the story

Active language should be used ratehr passive; correct terminology – survivor over victim – can change the negative language to positive

Don't use cat calling, eve teasing as commonly used words, it is sexual harassment, so call it what it is

While interviewing the survivor, don't trigger their emotions or their fears

KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

Journalists

How to survive in a post-truth world by On Purpose Consulting highlighted the fact that people prefer stories over facts and how not just online media outlets but also news sites are also working on people's preferences. Fake news has always been there; however, its magnitude has increased exponentially with the advent of new technologies. However, in today's world, especially on WhatsApp we can't really find out who has started the fake news. When the truth is out from the credible organisations, the opinions have already been made. One clear example is a hoax came out in 2007 that plastic has been found in Kurkure. Technology has always been a double edged sword. However, to deal with fake news or misinformation an individual has to characterize fake news with the content one has.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

In rural India, one needs to learn how to deal with the propaganda. One has to use the local perspective to determine the dissemination of any piece of information. Also, rural India responds strongly to visual impacts.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

Consumers; civil society

Moderator: *Girish Balachandran, Founder and Managing Partner, ON PURPOSE*

Speakers: *Paarul Chand (PRmoment India); Pradeep Wadhwa (ReNew Power); Ravi Tiwari (BizAugmentor)*

Internet and civil liberties by Sanjukta Basu covered topics of free speech and gender trolling; political parties, fake news and social media; access to Internet; Internet and state control discussed the barriers restricting full civic participation in the online space. The phenomenon of gendered cyberhate or social media trolling against Indian women restricts their access to online spaces. Criticizing majoritarian violence and powers that be provoke a surge of online backlash and continuous trolling. Pervasive and misinformation becomes complicated to mitigate as a result of the scale and shareability afforded by digital technology. Therefore, it becomes difficult to correct or regulate misleading and abusive information in real time. There is a need to hold on to the truth on digital space and work towards a democratic social media because the world is in dire need of safer digital space.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Ensuring inclusive and safe participatory spaces online

Speakers: *Sanjukta Basu (Journalist and Political Analyst); Dyuti Sudipta (Researcher and Activist); Ankit Lal (Aam Aadmi Party); Shubranshu Choudhary (CGNet Swara); Ajaz Lone (Development Professional)*

INTERNET FREEDOM AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

Online censorship and human rights violations have increased as States and private players resist the democratic potential of new media. The sessions under this theme dealt with the following questions: How can we preserve the participatory nature of the Internet? How can we use the affordances of social media to promote human rights, equality and enable rights based solutions? How can civil society preserve and improve the Internet?

SESSIONS:

» Intermediary liabilities and gender based violence by the Centre for Internet and Society (CIS)

» Online harassment: The form of intimidation by Software Freedom Law Centre (SFLC)

» Living in digital darkness: Internet shutdowns in India by SFLC & Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF)

» Storytelling in the digital arena by Filmbooth

Intermediary liabilities and gender based violence by the Centre for Internet and Society (CIS) explored the following two questions: (a) Do we have to take a legal recourse or can we have a community based solution? (b) Can a community based solution involving community based tools be used to solve the issue of GBV in the digital world? GBV violence affects people the most since they are highly visible yet difficult to monitor. Mostly discussions around digital violence revolve around verbal violence; however there are many folds of violence. Consider for example cases like revenge porn and rape videos. Platform accountability becomes an important factor in curbing GBV. Redressal mechanism for GBV should involve improvement in intermediary design duty and incorporating a gender sensitive way of law.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Hate speech law should have gender grounds with privacy dimensions. For example, whoever intentionally or knowingly captures, publishes, or transmits the image of a private area of any person without his or her consent, under such circumstances violates the privacy of that person.

Speakers: *Apar Gupta (Internet Freedom Foundation); Jyoti Panday (Independent Consultant); Amrita Vasudevan (IT for Change); Chinmayi SK (The Bachchao Project); Anja Kovacs (Internet Democracy Project); Aishwarya (Internet Democracy Project); Japleen Pasricha (Feminism in India).*

Online harassment: The form of intimidation by Software Freedom Law Centre (SFLC) started the discussion with the very question of what is freedom on the Internet and what is online harassment. By definition, online harassment is, the use of the Internet to harass, threaten, or maliciously embarrass. However, in today's world, cyberbullying or online trolling has become a norm. Personal attacks on the Internet on a woman when she is expressing her views, has become a common occurrence which affects their full public participation. This is because a patriarchal viewpoint extends to the cyberspace too. However, deep-rooted problems like patriarchy and casteism need more pervasive solutions. Social media has become a way for marginalised voices, like those of Dalit women, to find a space for expressing themselves, which makes this an indispensable medium for them. However, at the same time persistent abusive behavior also serves as a tool for intimidation to enforce similar norms of marginalization. Although, India has existing laws relating to the cyberspace what it lacks it proper enforcement.

Living in digital darkness: Internet shutdowns in India by SFLC & Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) highlighted that India has seen over 120 shutdowns this year and over 250 shutdowns since 2002. Internet shutdowns restrict a citizen's right to free speech and are a suspension of fundamental rights. The proliferation of Internet access has led to rumours, fake information or misinformation to circulate faster and more rapidly. Considering the speed and the momentum, local police and administration finds it easier to shutting down the Internet than tackle mobs. Nikhil further added that lack of education, low enforcement capacity and failure of central leadership also adds to causes of shutdowns. Last year Internet in Darjeeling was shut for a hundred days. It is imperative to realise that there are real world social, political, economic, and administrative impacts of Internet shut downs. Internet shutdowns do not take place in a vacuum but have many layers. Citizens are technologically and behaviourally affected, rendering it an administrative issue and not merely a technological one.

PRACTICE LEARNINGS:

The Bachchao Project has conducted an extensive study comprising of women from the state of Manipur, a state riddled with AFSPA [Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act] and other problems. On one hand, where the increase in Jio connections have enabled Internet access enabling businesses to grow, on the other hand the state has already seen three shut downs. Additionally, due to the lack of news websites, the possibility of more unreported shut downs looms large. It is important to understand that shutdowns aggravate anxiety and issues of public safety. In Manipur women are at the forefront of peace movements, and shutdowns considerably curtail these movements, affecting women mentally and physically. Additionally, there is no substantial proof that shutdowns result in reduction of unruly behavior.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

There is a dire need for new regulations and their proper, efficient, and transparent implementation.

Moderator: *Tripti Jain (SFLC)*

Speakers: *Nikhil Pahwa (Medianama); Mansi Kedia (ICRIER); Rohini Lakshane (The Bachao Project); Prasanth Sugathan (SFLC)*

Storytelling in the digital arena by Filmbooth underscored the contribution that digital technologies have made towards democratising story-telling. Films are the most powerful medium to spread ideas. Digital films have democratized story-telling by enabling everyone to become a filmmaker. Nowadays the key ingredients required to make a successful film are easily accessible, all it takes is an idea, a camera, online resources, creative commons, rules and techniques, location, editing, music and an audience to make a successful film. It is important to "learn, hit, and trial", working towards finding the necessary resources, and then going forward with executing the idea. The answer to an audience question on which would be the ideal camera for a beginner, it was replied, "the one you can afford".

Speaker: *Gaurav Raturi (Filmbooth)*

DATA PRIVACY, ENCRYPTION, AND SECURITY

Privacy and security concerns online have become critical concerns as States, corporate bodies, and citizens grapple with increasing privacy and security threats at a time when technology is developing rapidly. How can we ensure that privacy and fundamental rights are not sacrificed for innovation and development? How can we demand more of platforms? Are current regulatory norms enough? How do we demand for greater protections?

SESSIONS:

» Decoding privacy policies by National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP)

» Digital security at the grassroots: Realities, needs, and challenges by Point of View (POV) and Digital security training by Software Freedom Law Centre (SFLC)

» Consumer perspectives in era of digital technologies by CUTS International

» Is your health data safe on your apps? by Hidden Pockets

Decoding privacy policies by National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) started with few questions on disclosures in privacy policies: does consent work? And what does a privacy policy mean in today's world? NIPFP then handed out Flipkart's Privacy Policy to the audience, followed by a quiz for 15 minutes. While filling up the quiz, one of the audience members remarked, "no one reads a privacy policy, we just click next. But what people don't understand is, privacy policy is important." To quote Edward Snowden, "the consent of the governed is not consent if it is not informed". Consent is important and so is privacy. However, once people give their consent, their data can often be misused and the ramification of the same is quite huge. However, certain incidents make you question the very foundation of the belief - is consent really broken? Is there no hope left for consent? There is a growing concern for consent in this world where our privacy is at stake.

Digital security at the grassroots: Realities, needs, and challenges by Point of View (POV) and Digital security training by Software Freedom Law Centre (SFLC) saw POV discuss digital divides in access to technology. Firstly, an increasing majority of the people who are accessing the Internet for the first time are accessing it through their mobile phones. Therefore, the first divide occurs among those who access Internet via their mobiles versus laptop. The second divide in terms of access to technology occurs along gender lines. In terms of the age of access, boys are more likely to get smartphones earlier than girls. Moreover, girls using mobile phones in odd hours make people keen to check their call log, messages, and ask many questions. Putting passwords, too, are of no use as parents can demand the password anytime. The session also showed technology and domestic violence is linked. It so happens that the husband often takes the phone, monitors, questions or sometimes use her phone to cut her connection with her family and friends. Further, language becomes a barrier in full utilisation of the digital device. Not many local languages are available on many apps or websites; and even if they are, often users do not know how to change the language.

The second part of the session by the SFLC discussed the importance of having a strong password as the first line of defense. This was followed by live demos of how Google can access all activities on your phone. This can be checked by anyone through the link: (myactivity.google.com). One can also check whether their data has been breached or not through haveibeenpwned.com. Finally, the session concluded by discussing options for safe and private browsing: Duckduckgo.in, Startpage, Firefox Focus, using https:// for any online forms, Tor browser, OrFox with Orbot, Onion Browser, Firefox Light Beam, Smart https:, uBlock origin- block ads, privacy badge, and temporary containers.

Consumer perspectives in era of digital technologies by CUTS International reinforced how data privacy is also another topic that needs equal importance. By definition, data privacy, also called information privacy, is the aspect of information technology (IT) that deals with the ability an organization or individual has to determine what data in a computer system can be shared with third parties. Data privacy and protection of data are becoming increasingly important; therefore it important that users have the necessary awareness of online tools to protect their data. In order to understand this holistically, it is important that digital citizenship has to come within concept of 'citizenship' itself.

Speakers: *Usha Ramanathan (Independent Legal Researcher); Jyoti Panday (Independent Consultant); Beni Chugh (Dvara Research); Swati Punia (CUTS International)*

I s your health data safe on your apps? by Hidden Pockets facilitated a dialogue on how to make our online data consumption and production more secure. The session highlighted how all user data are tracked to the point that even one's log in and log out is mapped. Further, sharing one's number with various service providers reveals the data to an exponential number of third parties. The session then highlighted the importance of consent as being the bedrock of ensuring privacy rights are respected within online spaces. While consent is imperative both offline and online, it is necessary that all platforms today in both spaces, talk about consent. However, it is important that consent online has to evolve into informed consent. Since not all platforms follow the same ethics, both the concept of consent and who has control of the information is important. The panel concluded by highlighting the need for strong data protection laws in India and the need for privacy and security have to evolve by design.

Speakers: *Aisha Lovely George (Hidden Pockets); Payal Ganguly (Orange), Ramaseshan (Atom 360)*

FEMINIST INTERNET

The gender divide exists online just as it does offline. However, feminists the world over have used the Internet to bridge the digital divide and attempt to level the playing field. Feminist voices are thriving on the Internet amid vicious trolling and attempts to silence. How can the Internet be leveraged to bring about gender equality? What are policy and social hurdles that keep women offline? How can we build an Internet that is fluid, genderless, intersectional and multicultural?

SESSIONS:

» Accessing LGBTQIA+ rights using the Internet by Feminism in India and Varta Trust

» Re-imagining online censorship: Sex and sensibility in online spaces by Love Matters India

» How do women with disabilities experience the Internet? by Feminism in India

Accessing LGBTQIA+ rights using the Internet by Feminism in India and Varta Trust started the session with the question – what sort of impact will the section 377 have in the present online landscape? In September 2018, the Supreme Court decriminalized same sex intercourse and it is hoped that the impact will be huge and will grow stronger in the coming days. It was noted that the first thing a human being needs is the emotional support, which often comes through support groups on social media. Since identities are inter-sectional in nature, a queer person in Delhi might not experience the same atrocities as a queer person from Kashmir; hence, support groups are extremely important. However, it is still too soon to term the present phase as 'post-377 era'. Everyone, specifically brands, have started openly supporting LGBTQIA+ especially on social media, but did not do so openly before. The question still remains of how the Internet can be made safer for the LGBTQIA+ community? It was hoped that more queer people online would serve to make the Internet a safer place for queer people.

Speakers: *Brindaalakshmi. K (Varta Trust); Pawan Dhall (Varta Trust); Sha-man Gupta (TWEET Foundation); Japleen Pasricha (Feminism in India); Sukhdeep Singh (Gaylaxy Magazine)*

Re-imagining online censorship: Sex and sensibility in online spaces by Love Matters India opened the discussion by exploring the concept of censorship and questioning how censorship is creating havoc and should educational censorship be there. However, people will always find a way around censorship. There needs to be clear transparency along with censorship where questions around morality and sensibility are clearly addressed. Normalizing sexuality and using certain nude or semi-nude images for educational purposes is something that needs to be discussed and talked about. Censoring pictures which 'violates' the rules and regulations set by social media sites like Facebook need to be addressed. This is because these raise crucial issues of Facebook and Instagram's gaze regulating the representation of one's body and whether bodies can only be looked at in a sexual way.

Moderator: *Surabhi Srivastava (Love Matters India)*

Speakers: *Smita Vanniyar (Point of View); Amitabh Kumar (Centre for Social Research); Japleen Pasricha (Feminism in India); Ishmeet Nagpal (Save the Children)*

How do women with disabilities experience the Internet? by Feminism in India highlighted the double barriers encountered by disabled women constraining their full participation online on account of their gender and their disability. One of the speakers mentioned how she started a series, 'shit abled people say to me on the Internet' to create awareness of the kind of abuse and stigmatization disabled people go through on a daily basis, being a disabled individual herself. The series got rejected by the media platforms owing to excuses like, 'it had too many political statements'. Such disheartening experiences intensify the confusion and scare for a person with disabilities who wants to create a community online. Censorship is often biased towards minorities, where their expressions are continuously shut down since it is easier to do and generates lesser impact. However, the online environment can also be extremely liberating in providing a space for unfettered expression of identity, creating an enabling environment for formation of community and solidarity.

Moderator: *Asmita Ghosh (Feminism in India)*

Speakers: *Preeti Monga (Silver Linings Trust and Silver Lining Services); Shivangi Agarwal (Determined Art Movement); Pratishtha Deveshwar (Student)*

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Digitalisation has no doubt simplified a lot of processes. ICTs have changed the way and scale at which we communicate and disperse information. How can we continue to harness the potential that the Internet and emerging technologies hold? How can we deal with issues of accountability? How can we engage with each other and institutions and become active citizens using the Internet?

SESSIONS:

»   Digital campaigning and its role in democracy: How we use the Internet to mobilise people and bring about change by Jhatkaa and Maadhyam

»   Reaching low-income women with digital finance services by Womens World Banking

»   Future of open data

»   Digital India: Role of quality of service and Internet speed by Consumer Voice

Digital campaigning and its role in democracy: How we use the Internet to mobilise people and bring about change by Jhatkaa and Maadhyam addressed the issue of increasing active citizen participation across issues affecting public life in aspiring towards a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable India. Jhatkaa explained how necessary it is to think about a campaign properly and how campaign must zero in on an issue and address an 'ask'. The 'ask' can vary from campaign to campaign and from issue to issue; however, what is important is for citizens to make their governments accountable to their actions. Placing the mobile at the centre of change, Jhatkaa attributed the mobile phone to imperative in making communication available to people of different languages. Their increasing reach provides the possibility of real time and remote reporting. Jhatkaa reminded the audience that whenever a policy or law change takes place that could result in damage and devastation, it affects everyone. Similar to Jhatkaa's working philosophy, Maadhyam suggested making policy-makers accountable and understanding the role of parliamentary procedures in addressing environment and social crises. Maadhayam hopes to leverage Twitter to increase public consultation through the pre-Parliamentary consultation clause, where parliamentary discussions are subject to public scrutiny, and prior to them becoming accountable.

Practice learnings: *Jhatkaa started the campaign 'airalert.in' to raise awareness and accountability to tackle air pollution. They further made a 'call to target' action plan to stop expansion of Mumbai Metro (MMRC) that could have resulted in extensive damage to the surrounding green spaces. All residents was asked to call Maharasthra Chief Minister, Devendra Fadnavis with an aim to bring his attention to the cause. Another campaign of theirs, 'stop garbage burning in Bangalore' used mobile activism by focusing on the prosumer of content and asking them to share photos of garbage burning, in and around their locality to a communal WhatsApp number.*

Maadhyam utilised social media platform Twitter to engage with Parliament data by using #RSQuestionMissing to seek response on mission information during Demonetization.

Speakers: *Shikha Kumar (Jhatkaa); Maansi Verma (Maadhyam)*

Reaching low-income women with digital finance services by Womens World Banking highlighted how digital technologies can help extend financial inclusion to low-income women, however, their emancipatory potential remain constrained by social restrictions like gender inequalities in access and ownership of technology. For example, if a woman is using digital technology to access financial services and the OTP (One Time Password) goes to her husband's phone it can lead to potential trouble for the woman. There is a gap between ownership and usage and it comes with access.

Moderator: *Sriram Jagannathan (Womens World Banking)*

Speakers: *Ashish Ahuja (Fino Payments Bank); Arun Sharma (DBT Mission); Priyanka Chopra (Bharat Inclusion Initiative)*

Future of open data underscored the need for proper use of open data that can be socially useful. It is also important for such data to be depoliticized and used as a mechanism for accountability. However, it is often the case that data is political and various communities of citizens groups are looking at it differently. Therefore, it becomes tricky to have accountability based on destroyed and distorted data. The celebratory zeal with which big data was hailed will fizzle out in the future with practices and discussions revolving around big data and artificial intelligence. Therefore, it is important to preserve the values underpinning open data i.e. a reliable source of exercising public accountability.

Speakers: *Bhanupriya Rao (Researcher and Policy Professional); Rakesh Dubbudu (Factly); Srinivas Kodali (Interdisciplinary Researcher); Chinmayi SK (The Bachchao Project)*
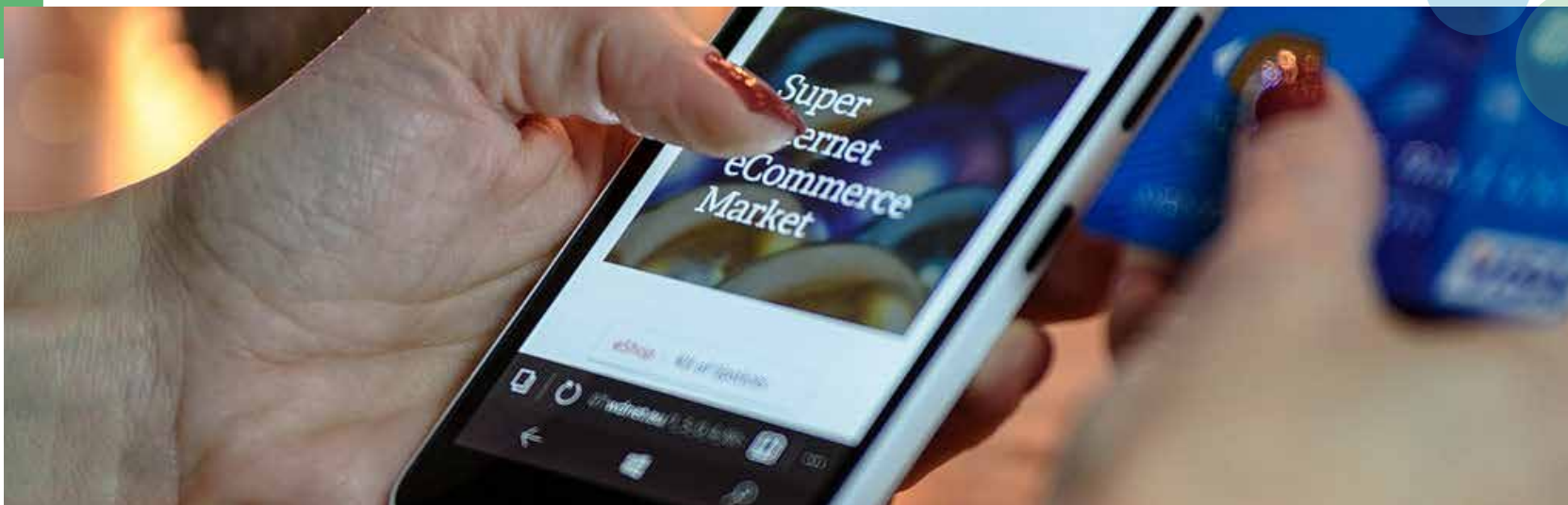
Digital India: Role of quality of service and Internet speed by Consumer Voice discussed how the Internet is slowly resulting in changing economies. This is leading to changing roles for all economic actors within the digital economy, both as beneficiaries and contributors. This has important implications for consumers, in terms of their rights and empowerment. The Internet is acting like the fuel that is changing the social fabric of the society. It is altering the safety and the secure structure of the society. Keeping the consumer in the centre, the focus is on how the consumer is pivoted in terms of access, digital rights, digital access and addressing what is beneficial and harmful online. Owing to the diversity of the country, we have to expand the scope of consumerism beyond businesses. The new age consumerism affects both the business practices and every day functionally. What matters today is Internet quality, which is being provided.

Speakers: *Paramjeet Singh (Consumer VOICE); Hemant Upadhyay (VOICE – NGO); Hamendra Kumar Dangi (Delhi School of Economics)*

CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

The valedictory session provided a suitable conclusion for the themes engaged with throughout the DCS. The session was moderated by Kazim Rizvi (The Dialogue) and involved B. Shadrach (Alliance for Affordable Internet), Rakesh Dubuddu (Factly), Usha Ramanathan (Independent Legal Researcher), Japleen Pasricha (Feminism in India), and Rajat Kathuria (ICRIER).

HIGHLIGHTS AND OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

ACCESS AND INCLUSION

» While India is the second biggest country in terms of Internet users, 70% of the population is yet to get online. While smartphones and data have become affordable, both are still unaffordable for many. Besides private Internet service providers, India needs to look at alternate means of connecting, such as community networks, and efficiency of government initiatives, such as BharatNet.

» 70% of new Internet users have stepped down from using Internet because there is no content for them in languages they understand.

» Digital India has transformed e-governance in several ways. However, it has also excluded many due to unavailability of infrastructure and inefficiency of a collaborative system.

» In India the public perception is that we have reached over 90% penetration of mobile phones but if you look at the data, there is still a big divide between rural and urban area as well as significant gender disparity.

» Digital infrastructure at the lower end of the pyramid needs to be strengthened for it to be a tool for empowerment.

» Unlike mobile voice penetration, Internet needs an entire ecosystem to take off.

ONLINE MEDIA, MISINFORMATION, AND FAKE NEWS

» There are 200 million WhatsApp users in India, and new users are joining in every day. For many, WhatsApp is the first access to the Internet. If messaging platforms like WhatsApp make users watch a short video on misinformation before signing up new users, the problem of misinformation can be addressed.

» The problem of misinformation is both socially and technologically driven, and we need solutions at both end. End users would also have to shoulder some responsibilities like fact-checking in order to be effective against misinformation and fake news.

» When a person goes online, they have access to all kinds of information. So the only way the online population can be controlled is through misinformation.

» Only 10% of people are propagating misinformation knowingly and with intent, where 90% are mere carriers of fake information.

» 70% of the respondents said that they forward news as they think it might benefit someone.

» In terms of coming to solutions, people have taken various initiatives, for instance, in Telangana there is a woman police officer who went back to the traditional method of communication like folks songs.

INTERNET FREEDOM AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

» Children and young adults are going online today without reaching a required level of maturity to deal with situations. In such a scenario, people often do not know how to react or what to do when trolled. You need to be extremely strong to stand against the extreme trolling and cyberbullying.

» Anonymity on the Internet allows people to say or act in a manner they would not otherwise in an offline space.

» The government uses "ban" as the easy excuse to prevent any law and order situation. In the last 5 years, there have been more than 250 cases of Internet Shutdowns in India.

» While the Internet is mostly available in English, digital media allows people to produce information in various audio visual formats that do not necessarily require knowledge and understanding of English.

» Do you keep subtitles on while watching a video? Do you use voice over while using maps? Do you use predictive text while typing on phone? These are all features originally created for persons with disability.

DATA PRIVACY, ENCRYPTION AND SECURITY

» We are moving towards a world where the Internet will show us what we need to see rather than we want to see.

» Companies are collecting massive data, which translates to a form of control. We need to see our data not as oil but as an extension of our body to understand the importance of data privacy.

» The government is putting pressure on WhatsApp to share the encrypted data not only for law and order reasons, but to keep a tap on citizens as well. To put this in perspective, the central government alone issues 7,000-8,000 orders for phone tapping per month in India.

FEMINIST INTERNET

» Patriarchy offline is moving online too, and efforts need to be made in terms of accessibility, usability and safety to ensure inclusiveness of all.

» It is important for LGBTQ+ people to get online to be visible and accepted. However, it is equally important for the platforms and the existing users to make the Internet a safe space for the LGBTQ+.

» Platforms like Facebook and Instagram filter content related to "breasts", "vagina" and "menstruation". Why are these offline taboos translating online too?

» Create access to physical and psychological health services and legal services for marginalized LGBTQIA+ identities.

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

» Most users do not know which app is collecting what data and for what. We do not just need consent, but informed consent.

» Companies need to make their intentions more clear, they need to inform the citizens what information are they collecting and how will they be using it.

» Armchair activism is not all that bad. There have been several instances where we have seen simply collecting digital signatures, making missed calls and sending text messages have turned into game changing campaigns.