YOUTH INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM INDIA 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

We Took the IG dialogue to the youth of the North East region of India in 2023!

About Youth IGF India

We are an independent youth-led non-profit platform recognised by the United Nations Internet Governance Forum and supported by the India School on Internet Governance. The platform was founded by Ms. Ihita Gangavarapu, who is a youth leader back in 2018. The team currently consists of motivated individuals who came from different stakeholder groups like civil society, private sector, technical bodies etc.

We actively mobilise, engage and empower youth via various dialogues on the future of governance of the Internet. We are a firm believer of the idea that youth has the potential to play an active role in decision making on policies and technological developments around Internet governance and all they need is capacity building; Youth IGF India is here to fill that vacuum. We are a platform where youth engage in intergenerational deliberations on issues of emerging technology and policy developments around AI regulation, cybersecurity, digital inclusion, data protection and more. Mostly, the experts introduce our audiences to the cutting-edge research or policy concerns/hesitations around relevant topics (ChatGPT in 2023, Blockchain in 2022, AI in 2021 etc.) therefore making the interaction a unique experience for the Global South audience.

Multi-stakeholder representation at the heart of Youth IGF India- it is reflected in our decisions/actions.

We actively include and seek for candidates from different stakeholder groups in our Fellowship program, Local participants, Organizing committee, Advisors and Speakers.

Over the last 5 years, through global collaborations, our fellowship program and our annual forum, we have empowered more than 2500 young people. Our community consists of cyber security professionals, Free speech advocates, innovators, and civic tech designers who join hands to voluntarily engage along with industry leaders to design -

- Expert webinars/webinars to explore relevant topics
- Cyber-security workshops
- Mentorship modules
- Public policy explainers

2023 edition highlights

Connecting the unconnected: Taking IG dialogue to North East region of India

Youth IGF India's participation/Exchanges at Regional and global platforms excluding Annual Forum and inSIG:

•IGF, Kyoto
•ICANN, Berlin
•UN Headquarters – SDG Digital, NY
•RightsCon , Costa Rica
•Mobile World Congress, Barcelona
•Nepal YIGF session, Online
•ITU Headquarters, Geneva
•Women's day- GNITS, Hyderabad
•And many more- representation by fellows, OC and community members

2023 highlights

- 500+ Applications received
- 24 diverse set of fellows selected from 10 States and 2 UT (Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Maharashtra, UP, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, MP, Jharkhand, AP, J&K)
- 12 received travel and accommodation support
- 250 Local participants in Forum
- 8 Mentorship session with Industry leaders
- 13 Speakers at Annual Forum from ICANN, Facebook, Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre - Ministry of Home Affairs (Govt of India), IIT Guwahati, UN, ISOC, Digital Futures Lab, CSDD
- Support from inSIG, ICANN, META, IIT Guwahati

Our **Vision for 2023** involved the following -

- Mobilize strong and sustainable local participants and partnerships from North East of India.
- Effective fellowship program with actionable outcomes.
- Diversify thematic area and bringing more diverse speakers at the forum.
- Improve global presence and increase meaningful contribution to policymaking: Take youth messages from India to IGF 2023 in Kyoto, Japan

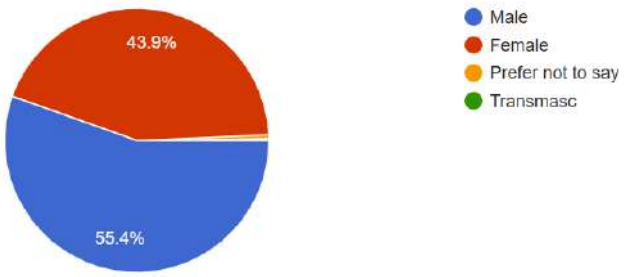
Youth IGF India 2023 Fellowship:

The fellowship selects individuals from different educational and professional backgrounds through a competitive process. These young minds are exposed to the internet governance space through mentorship sessions, mock stakeholder consultations and case study sessions on real-time issues pertaining to internet governance. As next generation leaders, the fellowship provides an opportunity to analyse policies from different perspectives in order to strengthen the policy ecosystem. After satisfying the requirements, the fellows are also provided with financial support to attend the Youth IGF India annual event in person.

- Mobilized 2500+ youth during the past five years
- Our support has helped our fellows jobs at Centre for Communication Governance at National Law University Delhi, Saraf and Partners, Dunzo, Kuan Advisory, Digital Empowerment Foundation etc.

MORE THAN 500 APPLICATIONS RECEIVED!

Another milestone crossed! We received more than 500 applications for our 2023 fellowship program.



From the pool, 24 fellows were selected to receive mentorship and have the opportunity to receive financial support to attend the Youth IGF India annual forum in person at IIT Guwahati on 28th of September 2023.

Abhay Chetri	Central Institute of Technology Kokrajhar
Abhishek Kumar	Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati

Abhishruti Baruah	Royal Global University, Guwahati
Anahida Bhardwaj	Jindal School of Government and Public Policy
Ananya Moncourt	Centre for Communication Governance, National Law University Delhi
Apoorv Dandavate	MGMU's Jawaharlal Nehru Engineering College, Aurangabad
Armaan Choudhary	Kirori Mal College, University of Delhi
Bijo B. Varghese	Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati
Dhruv Shivakumar	Anna University
Indrajit Doley	National Law University and Judicial Academy, Assam
Lokendra Sharma	National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru
Malcolm Hendricks	Kautilya School of Public Policy, Hyderabad
Mansi Sharma	NITI Aayog
Namratha Murugeshan	Ikigai Law
Niharika Haridas	Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai
Ojus Tyagi	South Asian University
Sameer Gahlot	National Internet Exchange of India (MeitY)
Shrishti Sinha	Digital Empowerment Foundation
Sruthi Vanguri	Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi

Suhaib Salman	IDIA
Unnikrishnan Nagarajan	Varahe Analytics Pvt Ltd
V. Abhishek	Centre for Digital Economy Policy
Vaishnavi R Vijayan	Moon Village Association
Vignesh Shanmugam	Centre for Communication Governance, National Law University Delhi

The Youth Internet Governance Forum Fellowship was initiated with the aim of building a new cadre of internet leaders who are motivated to learn, engage and take action to strengthen the internet governance policy ecosystem. The YIGF Fellowship Program provides focused mentorship and guidance to the best young minds from diverse backgrounds.

Given that internet governance is a space which requires multi-stakeholder perspectives to an issue, the fellowship selects individuals from different educational and professional backgrounds. The fellows are selected in a manner to ensure that every stakeholder group is adequately represented. The stakeholder groups include private, academia, technical, and government. This helps to maintain the balance of ideas while discussing any issue/problem/policy pertaining to internet governance.

These young minds are exposed to the internet governance space for a period of two months through mentorship sessions, mock stakeholder consultations and case study sessions on real-time issues pertaining to internet governance. As next generation policy leaders, the fellowship provides an opportunity to analyze policies from different perspectives in order to strengthen the policy ecosystem.

The **Fellowship programs were designed in 3 Phrases -**

Fellowship Phase 1: Mentorship Sessions
Fellowship Phase 2: Stakeholder roleplay
Fellowship Phase 3: Annual Forum

Here's a brief overview of all 3 Phrases which is followed by detailed session-wise description.

Fellowship Phase 1: Mentorship Sessions

One of the most significant aspects of the fellowship is capacity building and to educate the fellows on the different issues pertaining to internet governance. Therefore, for the first time in five years, we built a mentorship program for our fellows in 2022.

The mentorship sessions were aimed at disseminating knowledge on the internet governance space and in engaging in real-time issues in this space. This year, our fellowship program had two-month mentorship sessions. The sessions were centred around discussions on basics of internet governance, emerging technologies, fundamental rights in the internet governance space, cyber security etc.

Fellowship Phase 2: Stakeholder roleplay

The stakeholder sessions are conducted with an aim to introduce fellows to the idea of public consultation. Stakeholder consultation are internal sessions, and do not include any external speaker/mentor. The fellows are given a case study on an issue in the internet governance space, and are asked to find a policy solution to it from the perspective of different stakeholder groups.

Fellowship Phase 3:Annual Event

The annual event forms an important part of YIGF. The YIGF fellowship culminates into the annual event. We provide an opportunity to our fellows to interact with the different speakers from India as well as across the globe. Through the annual event, we provide an opportunity to our fellows to form connections and to share interests in the internet governance space. For more details on our past speakers, please visit our website www.youthigf.in

Phase 1: Mentorship sessions

The mentorship sessions were aimed at disseminating knowledge on the internet governance space and in engaging in real-time issues in this space. Our mentors for the sessions were Radhika Jhalani, Volunteer Legal Counsel, Software Freedom Law Center; Apar Gupta, Executive Director, Internet Freedom Foundation; Ameen Jauhar, Senior Resident Fellow, Vidhi Center for Legal Policy; Anju Mangal, Head of Asia Pacific, Alliance for Affordable Internet, WWW Foundation and Nidhi Singh, Center for Communication Governance.

Here's an **outline of the timeline** -

Phase1: Fellowship Induction

- Mentorship Session I: Introduction to Internet Governance and Relevance to India Context
- Mentorship Session II: Internet Access and Digital Divide
- Mentorship Session III: Internet Shutdowns: In India and beyond
- Monthly Check-in with Fellowship Team
- Mentorship Session IV: The Regulatory Realm of Disruptive Technology

Phase2: Virtual Stakeholder Roleplay

- Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum - Brisbane, Australia
- APrIGF Report Submission & Draft Problem Statement
- Mentorship Session V:Global Digital Governance and Competition Regulation
- Mentorship Session VI: Geopolitics of Cyberspace
- Final Blog Post Submission

Phase3: Youth IGF India Annual Forum

- Problem Statement Presentation
- Mentorship Session VII: Career Building in Internet Governance
- Wrap-up and Experience Sharing

Mentorship Session 1: Internet Governance and it's relevance to India

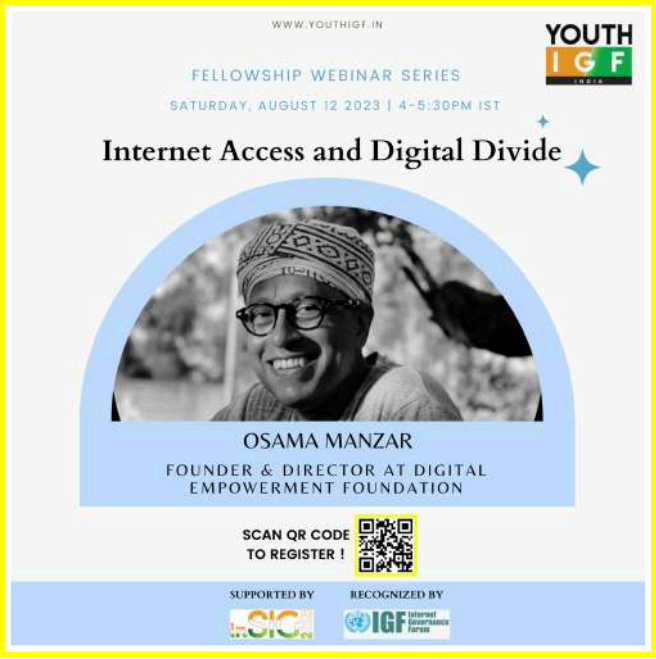
Youth IGF India welcomed Mr. Gangesh Verma, Principal Associate at Saraf and Partners and Mr. Anand Raje, CTO at India Internet Foundation, and Internet Resiliency Researcher to discuss on the topic of 'Internet Governance and it's Relevance to India'.

The focal point of this session revolved around the governance of the Internet, its development, and the role played by different actor(s) such as Government, private sector, and civil society in shaping the evolution and its use for the development of society (in terms of openness, stability, interoperability, reliability, security, inclusivity, and sustainability). Speaker(s) succinctly discussed about the Internet from technical/non-technical perspective, obstacles (such as digital divide, meaningful access, fragmentation) and role played by different actor(s) such as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) India, Securities and Exchange Board of India, Ministry Of Corporate Affairs among others, in addressing the issue(s) and revamping this space responsibly.

As we all are aware of the decentralised nature of the Internet and the fact that it is not regulated by anyone but its "use" is something which is subject to the provisions of different acts/rules/regulations/bye-laws/guidelines of respective jurisdiction such as the Information & Technology Act, Privacy laws issued by respective ministries in India.

We went on discussing the role played by international organisation(s)/forum(s) such as ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers), Internet Governance Forum (Internet Governance Forum), IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force), WSIS Process (World Summit on the Information Society) and different models currently in vogue such as multistakholder, multilateral and consensus.

Mentorship Session 2: Internet Access and Digital Divide

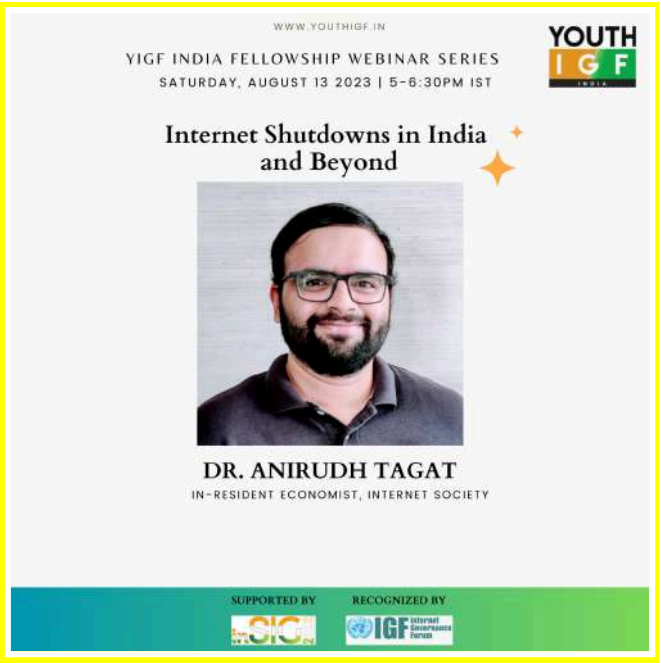


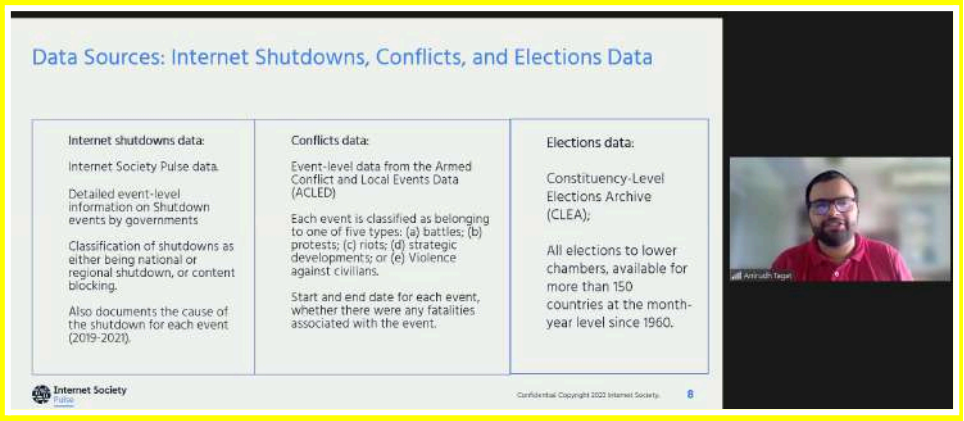
<u>Youth IGF India welcome Mr. Osama Manzar, Founder and Director at Digital Empowerment Foundation to discuss Internet Access and Digital Divide.</u>

The discussion delved deep into the concept of Digital Divide and its prevalence in India, shedding light on a crucial issue that affects millions. Digital Divide refers to the gap between those who have access to the internet and digital technologies and those who do not. Mr. Manzar emphasised that only 80% of Indians have access to internet connectivity, highlighting the stark disparity that persists.

Mr. Osama shared that in India, only 336 million people have access to meaningful connectivity. Meaningful connectivity goes beyond mere access; it means having the necessary infrastructure, skills, and affordability to fully harness the potential of the internet. In today's world, internet access is vital. Not having it means missing out on information, education, healthcare, and job opportunities. Another critical aspect discussed was the gender Digital Divide, highlighting the disparities in internet access between men and women.

Mentorship Session 3: Internet shutdowns in India and beyond





<u>Youth IGF India welcomed Mr. Anirudh Tagat, Resident Economist at Internet Soceity to discuss Internet Shutdowns in India</u>

Mr. Tagat gave a detailed presentation on the economic impact of Internet Shutdowns and introduced the fellows about the various tools and methodologies involved in determining that. He offered a unique perspective as to how Internet Shutdown not only impacts free speech but also affects soceity at large. He illustrated this via various data e.g. Internet soceity Pulse data, Conflicts data from Armed Conflict and Local Events Data, and election data from Constituency-level Election Archive (CLEA).

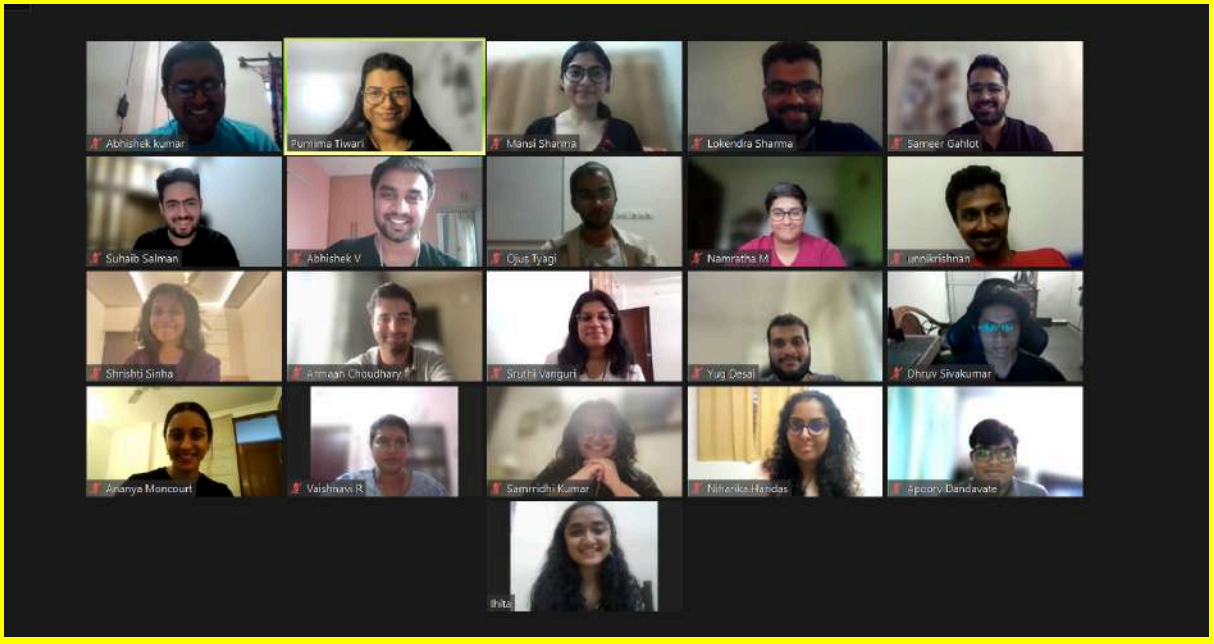
Mr. Tafat underlined that there are multiple country-level indicator and outcome data which could be studied to thoroughly approach the economic impact.

Mentorship Session 4: The Regulatory Realm of Disruptive Technology

<u>Youth IGF India welcomed Mr. Jibu Elias, distinguished AI Ethicist to discuss the Regulatory Realm of Disruptive Technology.</u>

Mr. Elias introduced about the Artificial intelligence and the various discussion around the AI ecosystems on privacy, surveillance etc. He explained about the regulatory mechanisms involved to monitor the development and discussed how every Nation is approaching AI developments. He provided insights on the challenges faced by Global governance, the concerns on IoT and how innovations precedes the regulations.

Phase2: Stakeholder roleplay

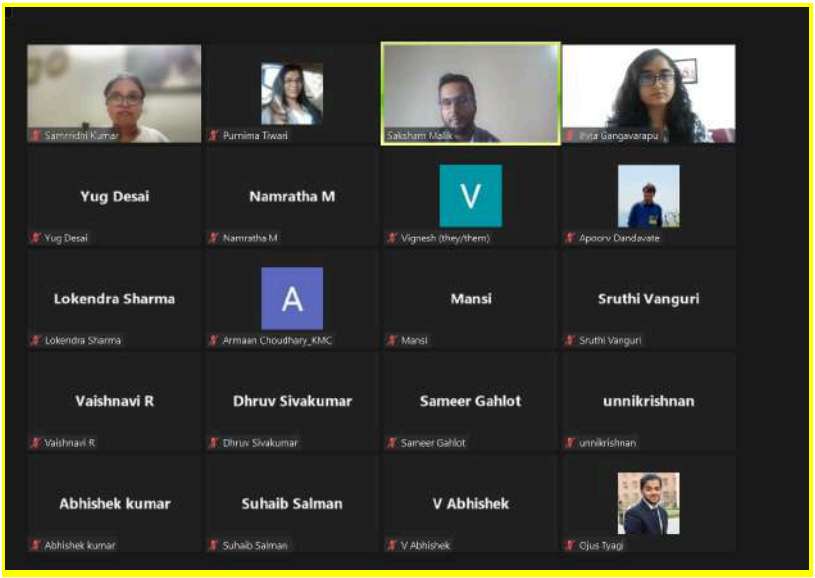


Stakeholder roleplay is an exercise with an objective to familiarise fellows with the nuances of the different stakeholders involved in IG decision making processes for example, National governments, private bodies/associations, technical community, civil society etc. For a particular case, the interests and impacts would vary for each of them leading to both agreements and disagreements regarding definition, approaches, standards, processes etc.

This year we organised a Virtual stakeholder roleplay session on the topic of "Regulation of AI" - with a detailed case study provided in advance. Each of the teams made an opening statement based on their internal consensus and presented it to the larger group which in turn could ask max 3 questions. This engagement helped each group member understand the real world interests of their stakeholder groups. The queries from different groups helped them sharpen their individual stand, which was later produced in an official document post the discussion.

This approach provided a key peer learning opportunity for our fellows alongside an exposure on a contemporary topic of AI regulations and most importantly it served as an introduction to the policy-making process.

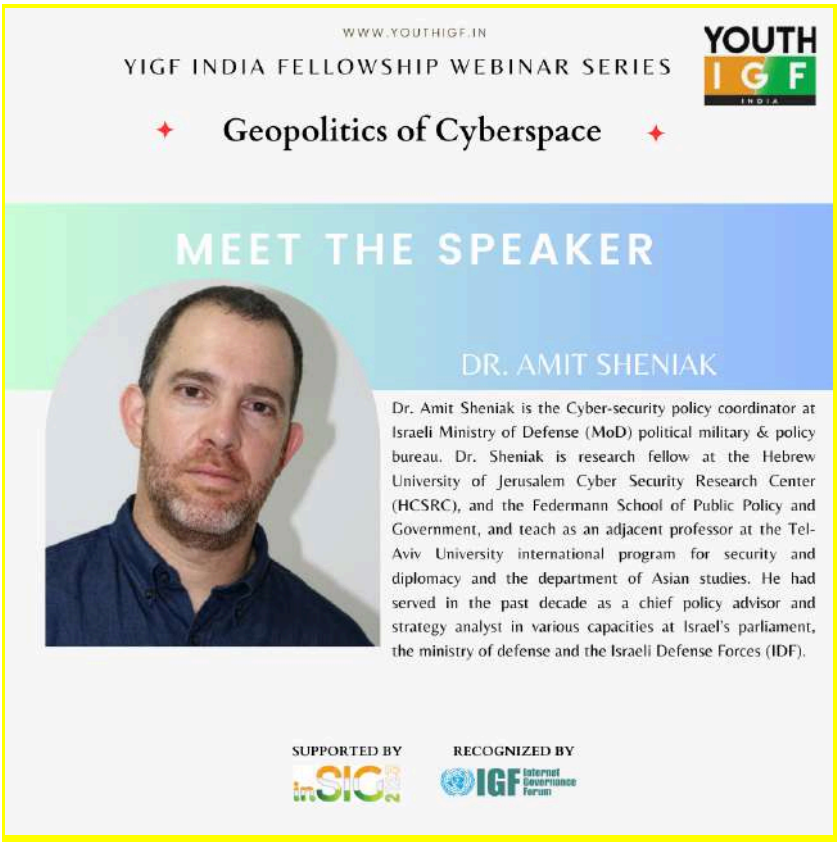
Mentorship Session 5: Global Digital Governance and Competition Regulation



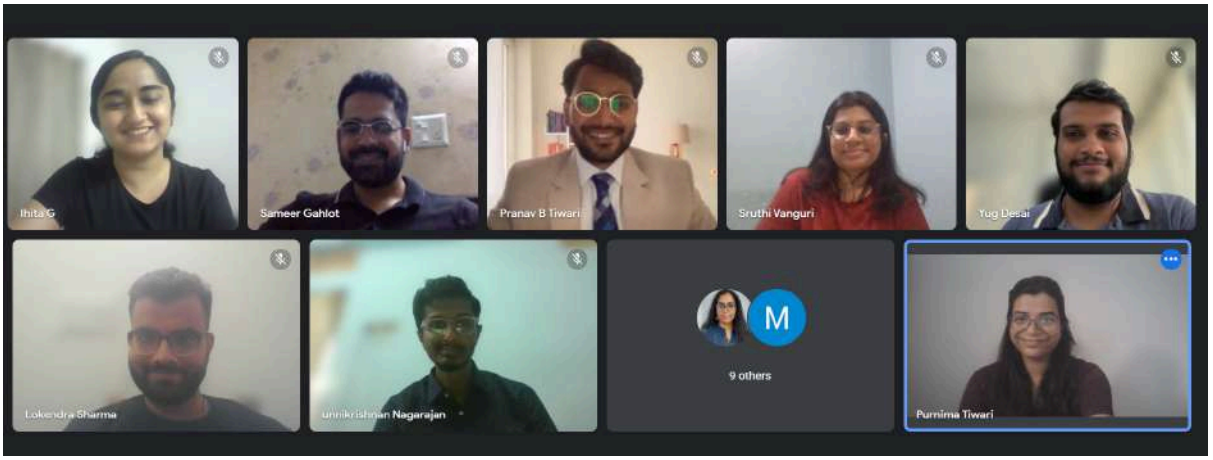
Youth IGF India welcomed Mr. Saksham Malik, Competition Practice Lawyer to discuss the Global Digital Governance and Competition Regulation

latest developments in India's competition landscape, including the Competition (Amendment) Act, 2023, and the proposed Digital Competition Act.

Mentorship Session 6: Geopolitics of Cyberspace



Mentorship Session 7: Career Building in Internet Governance



Youth IGF India welcomed Mr. Pranav Bhaskar Tiwari, Early Career Fellowship, Internet Society

Mr. Tiwari discussed about the various Fellowship, Grants, Opportunities available in the Internet Governance domain and underlined the importance of building a community and network in an individual's career.

Later, as part of Concluding session Youth IGF India's Ihita and Purnima briefed the fellows about the platforms upcoming plans which involved a snapshot of the Fellows journey. They highlighted that Youth IGF India organizing committee attempted to cover views of various stakeholders through the Mentorship session and Annuyal Forum. They acknowledged the limitations e.g. scheduling conflicts which was a roadblock in having representation of gender in terms of the speakers. They also acknowledged that certain themes e.g. multi-lingual internet, a topic that holds prominence for a country like India (with 22 officially scheduled language), Digital Public Infrastrucutre (DPI) etc. couldn't be covered.

They invited fellows to join the cause and encouraged to participate in platforms like India IGF, inSIG etc. They also invited fellows to share their feedback, future plans and suggestions. They also enquired about any kind of support that Youth IGF India could provide to help them pursue and navigate career in Internet Governance space.

Fellowship Program Summary

•8 session - 7 mentorship, 1 peer learning session
•Activities: APrIGF Participation, Stakeholder roleplay, identifying Problem statement, blog posts
•Annual Forum with 13 online and offline speakers plus total 130+ hybrid participants
•inSIG participation and fellowship

Fellowship Phase3: Annual Forum at IIT Guwahati

Youth Internet Governance Forum India was organized on 28th September 2023 at the India Institute of Technology, Guwahati, Assam with the theme of "*Empowering Youth Towards Sustainable Internet*".

Rapportuering Doc link: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1SJ8CTlGKQLgYX4EoXpo-xQESVWpO8AjU

Refer agenda for timeline of each session: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1zeFPbeHQVtjoXAUp1lZCKi4qrSDfd2mYufqBr70NPr8/edit#gid=0

The Annual Forum plays an important part of YIGF. The YIGF fellowship culminates into the annual event. We provide an opportunity to our fellows to interact with the different speakers from India as well as across the globe. Through the annual event, we provide an opportunity to our fellows to form connections and to share interests in the internet governance space. For more details on our past speakers, please visit our website www.youthigf.in

With 150 young participants including 12 fellows selected through the YIGF India Fellowship program 2023, the one day national forum was organized in a hybrid mode and saw multiple formats of session including workshops, collaborative sessions, panels and keynotes. Prominent leaders from the internet industry were present at the forum to engage in meaningful deliberations on digital inclusion, cybersecurity, AI regulation, data governance and opportunities for youth to contribute to IG. The forum received support from ICANN, APNIC, Meta for this edition.

Session1: Keynotes and Plenary Address

The plenary session was addressed by Professor KV Krishna, Dean Academic Affairs, IIT Guwahati who welcomed the participants and emphasised on the importance of youth engagement in decision making processes. Ms. Anja Gengo, NRI Initiative Coordinator at the United Nations IGF gave the plenary address online. Ms. Anja during her talk covered the IGF ecosystem, importance of meaningful youth engagement and encouraged all to participate in the 2023 IGF at Kyoto, Japan.

Session2: Digital Society and Challenges: Youth Perspectives

Moderator Ihita Gangavarapu began the session by inviting the audience to introduce themselves and talk about their areas of interest areas in the sphere of internet governance. Ihita invited and introduced Hillary Bakrie from the UN Secretary General's Envoy on Youth.

Hillary initiated the virtual session by introducing herself as an advocate for youth empowerment. She highlighted the importance of involving youth in decision-making

processes. She passionately conveyed her belief that the youth not only need to be heard but also actively participate in shaping policies and decisions that affect their lives.

Hillary emphasised the need for comprehensive support in areas affected by climate change. She mentioned the challenge associated with mobilizing youth as the common perception of youth being merely speakers rather than decision-makers. It is important to harness the potential of young individuals, she added. The youth are already mobilized, but it is the lack of structural support that becomes a major challenge hindering meaningful participation in Internet governance. These structural changes could be brought about by implementing the 12 key principles of the UN.

The UN has been working on various awareness programs in partnership with platforms like Twitter, to address online harassment by sharing recommendations and guidelines.In the global internet governance, priority areas for the intervention include digital inclusion, cybersecurity, ICT development, and global standards. These efforts must align with sustainable development goals to create a more inclusive, secure, and accessible internet for all.

She added that United Nations is contributing to addressing digital safety gaps in areas like cybersecurity, harassment, and online protection by engaging with partners to identify gaps and raise awareness. It collaborates with inter-agencies and technology companies, offering consultancy and advocacy to strengthen cybersecurity measures and bridge digital safety gaps.

(Source:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/15aBIzMKtJX2Holm1jxEEAuRvWMn_aoJUm5SVxD2Yk-M/edit)

This session also included presentations from the YIGF Fellows 2023 on the various critical technology policy based problem statements that they are working on. Ms. Sruthi Vanguri discussed on FemTech Apps: Safety, Security, and Surveillance in a Regulatory Vacuum. Namratha Murugeshwan and Abhishek V discussed on
Platform regulation.

Session3: Tea break

Session4: Navigating the future: AI's role in emerging tech
On the topic of AI regulation specifically focused on Generative AI, the panel included Satish Babu, an internet governance expert, Joinal Ahmed, AI Architect NavaTech Group and Prof. Arijit Sur, Dept. of CSE, IIT Guwahati.

The panel discussion involved posing one question to each member of the panel. The fourth and final question was posed commonly to all the panellists.

The panel discussion covered various aspects of AI, including regulatory perspectives, ethical considerations in AI design, the strengths and weaknesses of Generative AI, and current challenges in the field.

Dr. Satish Babu discussed the global regulatory landscape, highlighting differences in approaches taken by countries like the US, EU, and China. He emphasized the need for ethical considerations in regulation, proposed a principle-based approach, and suggested the use of regulatory sandboxes to balance regulation and innovation.

Mr. Jonail Ahmed, an AI Architect, focused on ethical considerations when designing and deploying AI, especially generative AI. He stressed the importance of legitimate data sources, user consent, and data anonymization. He also highlighted the impact of prioritizing ethics over profits, prompt engineering to prevent misuse, addressing bias, promoting diversity, and ensuring accountability.

Professor Arijit Sur provided insights into Generative AI, explaining its fundamentals, including GANs and Large Language Models. He mentioned its potential for creative content generation and personalized user experiences, along with the ethical concerns that need robust safeguards.

In response to the common question about the challenges Gen-AI currently grapples with, Dr. Babu emphasized cross-industry collaboration for tracking applications. Mr. Ahmed stressed diversity in AI development to reduce bias, and Professor Sur reiterated the importance of responsible AI, including clear protocols, stakeholder engagement, and threat assessment.

Overall, the panel discussion covered a wide range of topics related to AI, from regulation to ethics and technology, emphasizing the need for responsible and ethical development and deployment of AI technologies.

Question 1: Gen Ai exists in a reg vacuum, and every country seems to have a different perspective. How is India looking at it, and what are the emerging regulatory perspectives?

Answer (by Mr. Satish Babu):

Mr Babu highlighted the tremendous potential of emerging AI technologies, while emphasizing the need to address associated challenges. The discussion revolved around legal, ethical, policy, and governance implications in the use of AI, with three main actors involved in navigating through these implications: Governments, Technology Companies, and Civil Society.

Mr Babu, highlighted examples from a few key countries to highlight general differences in regulatory perspectives. The US adopts a light-touch regulation approach to encourage innovation and a business-friendly environment. In contrast, the EU focuses on detailed regulations with a focus on citizen-facing aspects, while China opts for

government-centric regulations. When it comes to challenges in such regulation, Mr Babu highlighted two major gaps- lack of expertise in the government for understanding AI, and slower pace of regulations as compared to technology advancements.

Mr Babu concluded his remarks by highlighting a few key regulatory considerations. Firstly, focus on ethics is important, as ethics could lead to standards, which in turn, could shape regulation. Another perspective suggested a principle-based approach, with a set of principles shaping regulatory contours. Lastly, a balance between regulation and innovation was proposed through the use of regulatory sandboxes to develop technology in controlled environments, which could be refined based on the outcomes.

Question 2: As an AI Architect, what are the ethical considerations that should be present while designing and deploying AI Solutions, especially generative AI?

Answer (by Mr Jonail Ahmed)

Mr Ahmed stressed that the origin and usage of data are paramount. Companies must ensure they have obtained data through legitimate channels, with explicit user consent, and in compliance with relevant laws and regulations. Furthermore, data should be stripped of personal identifiers to protect user privacy while allowing the model to learn effectively.

Mr Ahmed also highlighted a critical distinction between companies that prioritize profits over ethics and those that prioritize ethics first. This distinction can significantly impact the ethical integrity of AI applications.

Prompt engineering was discussed as a means to prevent misuse, such as generating content for malicious purposes like phishing attacks. This underscores the importance of thoroughly evaluating AI solutions before deployment, a process that should take several months and involve internal committees dedicated to AI ethics. These committees can reject releases that exhibit biases or use unethically sourced data.

Mr Ahmed also touched upon the issue of bias in AI systems. One example cited by him was the creation of an AI model designed to identify potential criminals, which failed due to biased training data that primarily consisted of images of working-class individuals. This demonstrated the dangers of using biased data, especially when targeting specific communities.

Diversity and inclusion were highlighted as key principles in AI design, as organizations are urged to prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). This not only helps mitigate bias but also ensures that nuances from various data sources are considered, reducing the risk of harmful outcomes related to physical, racial, or other biases.

Lastly, Mr Ahmed emphasized the importance of accountability in AI design. Developers should implement measures to block harmful content and prevent users from encountering specific types of content. This ensures user safety and underscores the responsibility that comes with deploying AI solutions.

Question 3: What is next in terms of strengths and weaknesses in the deployment of Gen-AI? How can we focus on making it more accessible?

Answer (by Professor Arijit Sur):

Professor Sur began his answer by explaining the basics of Generative AI. He explained that Generative AI is one of two main types of AI modelling, alongside Discriminatory AI. Generative AI focuses on creating things from scratch, such as images, text, or even music. One powerful technique used in Generative AI is GAN, or Generative Adversarial Network, where two neural networks, a generator and a discriminator, work together to improve the AI's ability to create realistic content. Large Language Models (LLMs) are another example of Generative AI, capable of generating human-like text, and are trained on very large data sets. This technology has applications in art, content generation, and even natural language understanding, making it a pivotal area in AI research and development.

In concluding his answer, Professor Sur pointed out exciting possibilities for creative content generation and personalized user experiences, in the use of Generative AI. However, he also highlighted concerns surrounding ethical use, and the need for robust safeguards to be addressed, to ensure responsible development and deployment of these powerful AI models.

Question 4- What questions does Gen-AI grapple with, currently?

Answer (All Panellists):

Mr Babu, in his final remarks, highlighted that there is a need for cross-industry collaboration to track and trace applications of Gen-AI, due to its large horizontal application. Building on this, Mr Ahmed highlighted the importance of diversity in the development of AI. Diversity in teams, and datasets could help reduce bias in outcomes, but training such models with machine data could unfortunately, reduce their ability to spot bias. Professor Arijit Sur concluded the session by reiterating the need for responsible AI, as an overarching principle. This would encompass protocols for use, clarity among stakeholders regarding the application of models, and scanning of threat horizons.

(source: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yszA1IaVw35x3YxVX-QScgflU1PApWwo/edit)

Session5: Global Internet Governance Ecosystem: Significance of Youth Engagement

The sessions aimed to engage the participants on what do they think are the major challenges of a digital society, bringing in focus cybersecurity, human rights, misinformation, AI and Gig economy.

Maarten Botterman (Board Director, ICANN) explained the global internet ecosystem, the evolution and challenges of the multi stakeholder model of governance, and the significance of youth engagement. Maarten Botterman started with his session, shedding some light on the role of the Internet and how it would be crucial for the youth going forward. He went on mentioning how the world is quite divided but united by the Internet which acts as a facilitator in connecting people anywhere with anyone.

Mr. Botterman spoke about the current global Internet governance ecosystem highlighting the key role that organisation in this space plays such as ICANN (Internet Cooperation for Assigned Names & Numbers) functioning with its vision "to be a champion of the single, open, and globally interoperable Internet". He further went on explaining the role that youth can play in the entire ecosystem; how they can make Internet access meaningful, accessible, and enhance trust within the overall community in order to create a safe and sustainable environment.

Further, he mentioned how the world is divided with boundaries but eventually it is united by the Internet which helps people to connect anywhere and everywhere with anyone. He also touched the base with organisations such as IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force), a premiere standards development organization (SDO) for the Internet with the mission "to make the Internet work better".

He also delved deeper into topics such as platform regulations, rule of principles, how youth can participate in Internet Governance ecosystem to raise their voices, legitimacy of ICANN, ICANN's tussle with ITU (International Telecommunication Union), how technologies, already existing, can be used to benefit the humans and to innovate further, and impact of the global Internet governance ecosystem on civil society. Lastly, he highlighted the role of the Internet and how it would change the way things currently function while empowering youth in the way which never existed ever before.

The Q/As majorly revolves around platform regulations, rule of principles, how youth can participate in Internet Governance ecosystem to raise their voices, roles & responsibilities of ICANN, legitimacy of ICANN, ICANN's tussle with ITU (International Telecommunication Union), how technologies, already existing, can be used to benefit the humans and to innovate for modern technologies, and impact of the global Internet governance ecosystem on civil society.

(source: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OcVRv1P3P20YoM_h6RY3BaCrqX0uSuu8/edit)

Session 6 and 7: Lunch and Group photo

Add photo

Session8: Connectivity and Access: Digital Inclusion and its Dimensions

Syed Kazi, Director at Council for Social and Digital Development (CSDD) highlighted the importance of meaningful access, last mile connectivity and issues in the North-East region around digital inclusion that require attention.

Dr Kazi drove home the point that the experience of using the internet in the North-East, and its impact on the lives of the youth is different from the rest of the country, highlighting how problems concerning internet governance are nuanced, rather than uniform.

Taking the example of internet shutdowns in Manipur, Dr Kazi reflected on the churning of society and its lasting impact. He also highlighted that remedial systems need to be available and accessible at the local level. Describing the starkly different context of internet access and connectivity in the tea gardens of Assam, the speaker discusses how his affiliate organization CSDD has started a community internet library in Jorhat to give people access to the internet at the local level.

The speaker threw light on the current state of cybercrimes against women and children in Assam - with Assam being the third highest state suffering from cybercrime against women as a silent crime. Dr Kazi discussed how his organization CSDD is invested in studying the authenticity of such data and the nature of such crimes. The speaker encouraged the audience to engage with questions such as follows: How do legal systems at local levels address this? Can people access these systems? Are there any outreach programs? Are cybercrimes prioritized?

Dr Kazi also discussed the various perspectives and dimensions of the digital inclusion debate, including four kinds of divide such as data divide, innovation divide, governance divide and value divide. Calling for solutions such as inclusive design, the speaker highlighted various contradictions in the discourse around connectivity, access and

digital inclusion such as Technology adoption vs resistance; Inclusive vs exclusive connectivity; Information access vs information overload; Privacy concerns vs data sharing; Local content vs globalization; Affordability/availability vs Quality of connectivity (meaningful connectivity); Education and skill development; Infrastructure development vs environmental impact.

Some of the other contradictions that were highlighted include community empowerment vs dependence; Digital inclusion vs social isolation; Short term gains vs long term sustainability; Access vs affordability; Universal design vs customization; Government regulation vs innovation; Digital inclusion vs job displacement; Digital democracy vs digital restrictions and violations; Digital rights vs responsibility; Development vs digital divide; Traditional vs digital culture.

The speaker also highlighted various policy dimensions and the inherent challenges such as Sec 69(A) of IT Act, DPDP 2023, the upcoming Digital India Bill, Govt as Fact Checker, TRAI & Broadband Speed, USOF - CTDP, State of connectivity and Digital North East Vision 2022.

Session9: Connectivity and Access: Digital Inclusion and its Dimensions (Civil Society, Private Sector, Government)

The activity enabled a discussion around 3 Policy questions to ideate upon collectively as three different stakeholders namely, Civil Society, Private Sector and the Government.

1. What does Meaningful Access mean to each stakeholder group?
2. What is the criteria to assess it?
3. How do we ensure Meaningful Access?

- **Civil society:** Civil society would address meaningful access at two levels: financial and linguistic. The civil society wants the government to incentivise meaningful access to all sections of society. However the civil society acknowledges that the government cannot do everything. Hence, we need to assess what the end user needs and then encourage the private sector to take initiative. Meaningful access entails access that benefits the user. We need two fundamentals to measure meaningful access: hardware and internet connectivity. The private sector needs to come in for internet connectivity. The criteria to assess is affordability and availability of content in the local language.

- **Private sector:** The private sector can enhance access by promoting products as advertisements. The sector evaluates meaningful access by reach and better services.

- **Government:** The government wants to create equity and they differentiate between access and meaningful access. The government wants to prioritize education. The government will provide satellite internet which is a cheaper and better alternative to optical fiber-based internet. The government will provide meaningful access with welfare schemes.

(source: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_wbGVTqsewSBavoqBBgYoaD421Og_TXH/edit)

Session10: Internet Governance: Unpacking Multistakeholderism

Referring to the preceding stakeholder roleplay session, Ihita opens the new session by remarking that when it comes to internet governance, consensus making is an art. Stakeholder role play helps in getting people together to ideate on relevant issues. Ihita then calls upon Jia-Rong Low, VP and Managing Director, Asia Pacific, ICANN, to speak on multistakeholderism.

Jia-Rong Low's presentation overall focused on what is internet, how the domain name system (DNS) works, and ICANN's role in internet governance (IG), and multistakeholderism in IG.

He started by explaining what the internet is. According to him, it is the technology that enables one device to connect with another device. Three things required are computer or devices for the internet to function: should speak the same language, have an address and lastly, have a name. These three things relate to the following unique identifiers: protocol parameters, IP addresses and domain names. Unique identifiers are important to ensure that one device can connect to another device or server (in case of a website, for instance).

The speaker then demonstrated what happened when one visited a website like www.domain.org on a browser. The request first reaches root servers. They forward the request to .org servers which further forward it to the domain.org server. The last server responds that the IP address of www.domain.org is 192.0.2.0. This makes the connection possible. A key point here is that all information on the internet is sent in the form of packets defined by a common protocol.

The speaker then explained how ICANN was central to the functioning of DNS. He remarked that even as people using the internet find it as important as water or electricity, they do not generally know who maintains it. The role of ICANN can be understood from the fact that if DNS does not work, there will be no global internet.

The last part of the presentation focused on multistakeholderism. The ICANN, Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) and the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) are governed by multistakeholder principles – everyone can participate in these bodies. The first platform that adopted multistakeholderism was IETF. The Request for Comments (RFCs) are published by the IETF for setting internet standards; anyone from any stakeholder group can propose a solution to a problem and then these proposals are discussed by the community. If accepted by the community, they are published as RFCs.

As far as multistakeholderism is concerned, it is important for all stakeholders to participate. But it is hard and challenging. That is why we have all these IG forums at the national, regional and international levels.

(source: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XRCtM2uSEI_-P5GKbtuaDx52PJUuA4fO/edit)

Session11: Beyond Borders: India's Approach to Global Data Governance

The speaker Anushka Jain, Research Associate, Digital Futures Lab and Ex-IFF joined on the session "Beyond Borders: India's Approach to Global Data Governance". Ms. Anushka Jain started the session by delving into the Digital Privacy and Data Protection Bill (DPDPB) of 2023, emphasizing the swift timeline of its introduction and passage in Parliament, with a prior rejection in 2022. The speaker raised concerns about the act, particularly its provisions allowing for non-consensual data use, the ambiguity surrounding duties and penalties, the exemptions provided, and the role of the Data Protection Board.

She also highlighted the evolving versions of DPDPB, including the 2021 data localization mandate, the 2022 allowlist for data flow to government-approved countries, and the 2023 blacklist of countries with data storage restrictions due to issues like a lack of commitment to data protection or geopolitical conflicts. The speaker noted that the DPDPB 2023 falls short of international standards, especially in terms of purpose limitation, data minimization, and storage limitation, with numerous exemptions granted to the private sector, distinguishing it from international benchmarks such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of 2016. This discussion highlights the ongoing debate and challenges surrounding India's approach to data protection and privacy in the digital age, as it strives to align with global standards while addressing its unique concerns and requirements.
On the guidelines and rules that can be followed to empower users, she responded that empowering users through guidelines and rules is crucial in the context of data protection. To achieve this, it is essential for the government to not only identify but also align with the principles of data protection. However, there are notable shortcomings in existing rules and laws. These gaps include a lack of depth and insufficient consideration of stakeholders' perspectives. Addressing these deficiencies and engaging with a wider range of stakeholders is essential for creating a more effective and inclusive framework for data protection.

Session12: Empowering Digital Defenders: Youth for Cybersecurity
The speaker Dr. Deepak Kumar, Cyber Intelligence & Digital Forensics Professional, Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre - Ministry of Home Affairs, GoI addressed the topic of Empowering Digital Defenders: Youth for Cybersecurity.

Dr. Deepak Kumar raised several important concerns and pointed out that the cybersecurity education and skills offered at universities may not align with what the government and industry are seeking, highlighting the need to bridge this gap. Additionally, the speaker highlighted the growing mental health issues among young

individuals due to the increasingly complex and evolving landscape of cyber threats. Dr. Deepak also touched upon the issue of youth turnover in cybersecurity jobs and the importance of understanding cyber threats and tactics used by threat actors.

He highlighted the necessity of bridging the gap between academia and real-world cybersecurity needs, citing examples such as open-source intelligence and the challenges of adapting open-source frameworks for government use. To effectively combat these threats, the youth must be educated about how cyberattacks are carried out, emphasizing the role of pirated software, content consumption, and certain websites in facilitating such attacks.

The speaker also discussed the issues of innovation in cybersecurity, the misuse of technology by youth, and the significance of knowledge sharing between academia, government, and private entities. He cited examples of areas where India could benefit from locally developed solutions, such as mobile forensics and secure messaging platforms.

Dr. Deepak emphasized the need for collaborative efforts involving stakeholders from various sectors. The relevance and control of datasets used in AI systems related to cybersecurity also came into focus, as did the misuse of technology in creating tampering or malicious devices. The speaker stressed the need for homegrown solutions to address mobile forensics, crypto analysis, and related issues, promoting youth involvement in developing these solutions and raising awareness among them about these crucial cybersecurity aspects. These insights underscore the multifaceted challenges and opportunities for youth in safeguarding digital landscapes and protecting the nation's security.

(source: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1EEaEr9F7JpKv9P86WS3nNwjXhR0lMloI/edit#heading=h.gjdgxs)

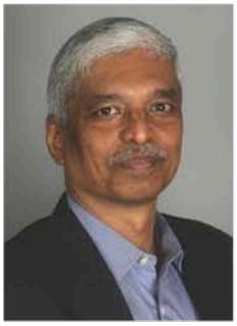
Session13: Youth and Internet Governance: Career Opportunities and Sustainable Engagement

Opportunities in the domain of internet governance to contribute, engage and even develop careers were mentioned by Snehashish Ghosh from Meta and Sarah Lake from the Internet Society took the audience through the IG ecosystem. This session introduced the young audience to various roles and capacities through which they can contribute to internet governance.

Annexure: Media coverage of the event

Our Teams - Advisory Committee and Organizing Committee

Advisory Committee



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Organising Committee Members for YIGF India 2023

1.Ihita Gangavarapu
2.Purnima Tiwari

3.Yug Desai
4.Samrridhi Kumar
5.Neelesh Maheshwari
6.Barkha Manral
7.Anoop Kumar
8.Nikhil Gehlot

Glossary -

- Annual Forum- our annual one day event open for all
- Cohort - the shortlisted fellows from each year
- Fellows 2023 - candidates who have been shortlisted through a competitive selection process

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