



Country Focus Report Update: India's Digital Transformation and Regulatory Framework

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INTRODUCTION

This report covers recent developments in India that are relevant to the Internet ecosystem and the mission of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) to maintain a secure, stable, and interoperable Internet. This report contributes to ICANN's ongoing efforts to help stakeholders better understand the focus of governments around the world by informing ICANN's community and stakeholders about India's regulatory trajectory, the status of key legislative initiatives, and new developments relevant to the global Internet ecosystem.

Throughout this report, passages labeled "Context" set out ICANN's assessment of how a particular development may potentially relate to its technical mission and the interests of its community and contracted parties. These passages are analytical in nature and are distinct from the factual narrative.

DEVELOPMENTS MOST RELEVANT TO ICANN'S MISSION

Much of what follows sits outside ICANN's technical remit and is included as background, because it describes the environment in which the Internet's unique identifier systems operate in India. A narrower set of developments engages ICANN's mission, its contracted parties, or the interests of the ICANN community directly.

Registration data and registrar obligations: The Delhi High Court's judgment of 24 December 2025 in *Dabur India Limited v. Ashok Kumar & Ors.* directs registrars serving Indian users to conduct mandatory e-KYC, restricts the offering of privacy services by default, and imposes a 72-hour disclosure obligation. Separately, the Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023 and the 2025 Rules govern how personal data, including registration data, may be processed and transferred across borders, with substantive obligations taking effect in May 2027.

DNS operations and infrastructure: The .in registry's back-end transition in May 2025, DNSSEC signing and the resolver-side validation gap, the growth of root server deployment to more than 60 instances across 16 cities, and the 15 IDN ccTLDs that bear on Universal Acceptance.

Unresolved definitional scope: Whether DNS-related services fall within "telecommunication services" under the Telecommunications Act 2023, which would attach the six-hour security incident reporting obligation to them.

Internet governance positioning: India's statements at WSIS+20 and WTSA 2024, and its hosting of ICANN85.

BACKGROUND OF INDIA'S DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Since the start of the decade, India has experienced significant digital transformation, with notable developments in its Internet and broader digital ecosystem. By June 2025, India became the second country (after China) to surpass 1 billion Internet subscribers (broadband: 979.71 million; narrowband: 23.14 million), according to the [Telecom Regulatory Authority of](#)

[India](#) (TRAI).¹ As of December 2025, India's total wireless mobile subscriber base stands at 1,244.20 million, with broadband subscribers at 1,007.35 million.² This substantial digital growth is largely due to the availability of affordable smartphones and low-cost data plans. India's teledensity stands at 91.74 percent overall (84.01 percent excluding machine-to-machine connections), though a significant urban-rural divide persists: Urban teledensity is 140.66 percent, compared with 59.07 percent in rural areas.

India's economy has maintained strong growth in recent years: 7.2 percent in FY2023–24, with FY2024–25 at 7.1 percent, per the revised National Accounts (new base year FY2022–23, released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on 27 February 2026). The Second Advance Estimate projects 7.6 percent for FY2025–26. According to a landmark report from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) published in January 2025, representing the first official measurement using the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development framework by any developing country, India's digital economy contributed 11.74 percent of national income (approximately \$402 billion) in FY2022–23, with projections reaching 20 percent of gross value added by FY2029–30.³

India's Internet growth has had a measurable impact on various sectors, including e-commerce, education, healthcare, entertainment, and government services. Digital payment platforms such as PhonePe, Google Pay, and Paytm have continued to accelerate financial inclusion through the [Unified Payments Interface](#).

Telecommunication Networks

As per the [TRAI monthly subscription data released 22 April 2026](#), the top four service providers account for over 99 percent of wireless subscribers: Reliance Jio with 496.34 million subscribers (39.21 percent market share); Bharti Airtel with 477.74 million (37.74 percent, including machine-to-machine connections); Vodafone Idea with 198.48 million (15.68 percent); and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) with 92.94 million (7.34 percent). On 27 September 2025, BSNL launched pan-India 4G services built on an indigenously developed technology stack (the "Bharat Telecom Stack," developed by Tata Consultancy Services, C-DOT, and Tejas Networks), representing India's first domestically designed mobile network architecture.

Context: BSNL's indigenous 4G stack is notable as it is one of the first large-scale deployments of a nationally developed mobile network technology. The technology stack was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi from Jharsuguda, Odisha. While sometimes referenced as Open RAN, the official nomenclature used by TCS and the Government of India is "Swadeshi 4G" or the "Bharat Telecom Stack."

DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Key elements of infrastructure enable connectivity and support India's digital ecosystem:

¹ TRAI, Quarterly Performance Indicator Report, Q1 FY2025-26 (April–June 2025), October 2025, <https://www.trai.gov.in/release-publication/reports/performance-indicator-reports>

² TRAI, Monthly Telecom Subscription Data, December 2025, released 10 February 2026, <https://www.trai.gov.in/release-publication/reports/telecom-subscriptions-reports>

³ MeitY and ICRIER, "Estimation and Measurement of India's Digital Economy," 22 January 2025, <https://www.meity.gov.in>

Undersea Cables Connecting India

India hosts approximately 20 international submarine cable systems landing at cable landing stations in five primary cities: Mumbai, Cochin, Chennai, Thoothukudi, and Thiruvananthapuram. Total lit capacity reached approximately 309 Tbps by end-2025, a significant increase from approximately 193 Tbps at end-2024, driven by the activation of [2Africa Pearls](#) (Mumbai landing on 27 March 2025) and the partial activation of SEA-ME-WE-6 (Mumbai landing on 30 December 2024; Chennai landing on 17 February 2025). Major new cable projects in various stages of deployment include Reliance Jio's India Asia Xpress and India Europe Xpress, Google's Blue-Raman, Meta's Project Waterworth, and Google's America-India Connect initiative. New cable landing stations are under development at Visakhapatnam, Puri (Odisha), and Dhuvaran (Gujarat).⁴

Data Centers in India

As India's digital footprint expands, the Government of India and the private sector have invested substantially in data centers. Installed IT load capacity has reached approximately 1,100–1,520 MW by end-2025 (varying by methodology across industry estimates), with major hyperscale investments announced by Microsoft (\$17.5 billion over four years, its largest-ever Asia investment, announced December 2025) and Google (\$15 billion over five years, announced October 2025).⁵

Root Server Instances in India

As of March 2026, India hosts more than 60 Domain Name System (DNS) root server instances, deployed in 16 cities. This is an increase from the 53 instances documented in a February 2024 study, driven largely by the addition of M-Root instances in Mumbai (June 2024) and Kolkata (December 2024).

DNSSEC Deployment

The .in country code top-level domain (ccTLD) has been DNS Security Extensions (DNSSEC) signed since 4 November 2010, making it one of the earlier ccTLDs in the Asia Pacific to deploy DNSSEC. NIXI, as the registry operator, maintains DNSSEC signing for .in and its 15 Internationalized Domain Name ccTLDs across Indian-language scripts. Following NIXI's completion of the .in migration to Tucows Registry Services on 28 May 2025, DNSSEC key management continues uninterrupted under the new back-end. On the validation side, Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC) Labs' measurements for India indicate a validation rate of around 10–14 percent of users resolving through DNSSEC-validating recursive resolvers, broadly in line with the South Asia regional average but materially below APAC leaders like Chinese Taipei and Viet Nam. Expanding validation at the resolver side, particularly among Indian Internet service providers and enterprise networks, remains the substantive DNSSEC priority for the ecosystem.

⁴ TRAI Chairman Anil Kumar Lahoti, First International Subsea Cables System Conference, New Delhi, March 2025; TeleGeography Submarine Cable Map, 2025, <https://www.submarinecablemap.com>

⁵ Savills India, India Data Centre Report, January 2026; JLL India, H1 2025; Colliers India, April 2025.

5G Network Deployment

India's 5G network, launched commercially in October 2022, now covers 99.9 percent of the country's administrative districts (an internal sub-state division comparable to counties), with 518,854 base stations deployed as of December 2025. While Jio is confirmed as the single largest fixed wireless access (FWA) provider globally, the country-level ranking between India and the United States (which had comparable FWA numbers in late 2025) varies depending on the data source and reporting period.⁶

GOVERNMENT DIGITAL INITIATIVES

India's digital growth has been enabled in part by government intervention. Over the past decade, the Government of India has invested in building a supporting infrastructure, allowing citizens to access services.

The Government of India's initiatives for public digital infrastructure have been grounded in the principle of interoperability. Notable government initiatives include: digital identity through Aadhaar (enrollment exceeding 1.43 billion identities as of September 2025); the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) that processed a record 21.70 billion transactions in January 2026 and 228.3 billion transactions for calendar year 2025, making India the processor of approximately 49 percent of global real-time payments by volume; a voice-based application, Bhashini, to help Indian users navigate online services in their local languages; the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), an interoperable e-commerce ecosystem; and BharatNet, the national rural broadband program (over 214,325 villages connected and 693,303 km of optical fiber deployed).^{7,8,9,10}

India's ccTLD policy framework supports Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) in all 22 scheduled Indian languages through 15 IDN ccTLDs operated by NIXI. On 28 May 2025, NIXI completed the transition of the .in registry's back-end technical operations to a new technical service provider, Tucows Registry Services, in what Tucows describes as the "largest single TLD migration in DNS history": 4.2 million .in domain name records, 9 million associated contact records, and 140 extensions were transferred to the new registry platform in under six hours with zero DNS resolution interruptions.¹¹

Context: The .in domain migration is significant from a DNS operations perspective. A migration of this scale, without service interruption, required coordination among NIXI, Tucows, and India's registrar ecosystem. The 15 IDN ccTLDs operated by NIXI are also relevant in the context of ICANN's Universal Acceptance initiative, as they include scripts (Devanagari, Bengali, Gujarati, Gurmukhi, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu/Arabic) that exercise a wide range of internationalized email and domain name compatibility requirements.

⁶ DoT data; Ericsson Mobility Report, India Supplement, November 2025, <https://www.ericsson.com/en/reports-and-papers/mobility-report>

⁷ UIDAI, https://uidai.gov.in/aadhaar_dashboard

⁸ NPCI, UPI Product Statistics, January 2026, <https://www.npci.org.in/what-we-do/upi/product-statistics>

⁹ ONDC Network Statistics; Government reply to Lok Sabha, 16 December 2025, <https://ondc.org>

¹⁰ DoT, BharatNet Dashboard (USOF), <https://usof.gov.in>

¹¹ Tucows Registry Services, ".IN Domain Migration Case Study," October 2025, <https://tucows.com>

INDIA'S EVOLVING REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

With the rapid expansion of the Internet, India has put into place several regulatory frameworks to deal with potential challenges related to privacy, cybersecurity, and data protection. In recent years, the government's approach has increasingly shifted toward incremental, sector-specific rulemaking under existing statutory frameworks rather than comprehensive, stand-alone legislation. Notable developments in recent years are detailed below. Each of these policy initiatives could have an impact on the Internet ecosystem.

Information Technology Rules, 2021

On 25 February 2021, the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 were approved, followed with significant amendments in October 2025 and February 2026. MeitY introduced these rules under the Information Technology Act, 2000 to regulate digital media platforms operating in India. While the substance of the rules is focused on the management of online content, which is outside of ICANN's remit, the content of the rules may be of interest to the broader Internet community, including ICANN's contracted parties. Since October 2024, two significant amendments have been published:^{12,13}

October 2025 Amendment (government takedown powers): Rule 3(1)(d) was amended to restrict content takedown orders to officers of joint secretary rank or above, require reasoned written orders with specific legal grounds cited, and mandate monthly reviews by the review committee constituted under Section 69A of the IT Act, 2000.

February 2026 Amendment (synthetically generated information): A new amendment addressing artificial intelligence (AI)-generated content introduced mandatory labeling or disclosure of synthetically generated information; a three-hour takedown window for such content threatening public order or national security; and a two-hour takedown timeline for nonconsensual intimate imagery created using AI tools.

Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023

On 11 August 2023, the [Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 was approved](#). The purpose of this act is to regulate the processing of digital personal data, with the main intent of balancing individuals' right to protect their data with the lawful requirements for data processing. Relevant clauses of the act that could impact ICANN's mission include:¹⁴

Seeking consent, Chapter II, Section 4(i)(a): "A person may process the personal data of a Data Principal only in accordance with the provisions of this Act and for a lawful purpose, for which the Data Principal has given her consent."

¹² The Gazette of India Extraordinary, CG-DL-E-25022021-225464, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (i), MeitY, 25 February 2021, the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 [updated 6.4.2023], <https://www.meity.gov.in>

¹³ MeitY, IT (Intermediary Guidelines) Amendment Rules, October 2025 and February 2026.

¹⁴ The Gazette of India Extraordinary, CG-DL-E-12082023-248045, Part II, Section 1, Ministry of Law and Justice, 11 August 2023, The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (No. 22 of 2023), <https://www.meity.gov.in/static/uploads/2024/06/2bf1f0e9f04e6fb4f8fef35e82c42aa5.pdf>

Obligation to protect personal data, Chapter II, Section 8(5), (6), (9), and (10): “A Data Fiduciary shall protect personal data in its possession or under its control, including in respect of any processing undertaken by it or on its behalf by a Data Processor, by taking reasonable security safeguards to prevent personal data breach. In the event of a personal data breach, the Data Fiduciary shall give the Board and each affected Data Principal, intimation of such breach in such form and manner as may be prescribed.”

Additional obligations, Chapter II, Section 10(1)(2): “The Central Government may notify any Data Fiduciary or class of Data Fiduciaries as Significant Data Fiduciary, on the basis of an assessment of such relevant factors as it may determine, including: (a) the volume and sensitivity of personal data processed; (b) risk to the rights of Data Principal; (c) potential impact on the sovereignty and integrity of India; (d) risk to electoral democracy; (e) security of the State; and (f) public order.”

Cross-border data transfer, Chapter IV, Section 16(1): “The Central Government may, by notification, restrict the transfer of personal data by a Data Fiduciary for processing to such country or territory outside India as may be so notified.”

After public consultation, which resulted in 6,915 inputs from various stakeholders, MeitY issued the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025 in November 2025. The rules follow a phased implementation: Phase 1 (November 2025) activates the Data Protection Board of India (DPBI) and administrative provisions; Phase 2 (November 2026) activates the Consent Manager registration framework and interoperability requirements; Phase 3 (May 2027) activates all substantive obligations including valid consent requirements, 72-hour breach notification to the DPBI, data principal rights (access, correction, erasure, grievance redressal, and nomination), and penalties up to 2.5 billion Indian rupees (\$30 million) per violation.¹⁵

Context: ICANN’s contracted parties could potentially be affected by the rules’ “negative list” approach to cross-border data transfers. In other words, transfers are permitted to all jurisdictions unless the Central Government specifically restricts transfers to a listed country or territory. As of the reporting date, no country or territory has been placed on the negative list. The mechanism exists as a framework for future executive action

Telecommunications Act, 2023

On 24 December 2023, the [Telecommunications Act 2023 was approved](#), superseding the Indian Telegraph Act of 1885, the Wireless Telegraphy Act (1933), and the Telegraph Wires (Unlawful Possession) Act (1950).¹⁶ Key sections of the act were brought into force in two tranches in June and July 2024. Since October 2024, five major rule sets have been notified to operationalise the act:

Telecom Cyber Security Rules (November 2024), notified on 21 November 2024 under Section 22(1) of the Telecommunications Act, 2023: “Every telecommunication entity shall, in the event of a security incident, report such incident to the Central Government within six hours of

¹⁵ Gazette of India, G.S.R. 846(E), Digital Personal Data Protection Rules 2025, signed 13 November 2025, published 14 November 2025, <https://egazette.gov.in>

¹⁶ The Gazette of India Extraordinary, CG-DL-E-24122023-250880, Part II, Section 1, Ministry of Law and Justice, 24 December 2023, The Telecommunications Act, 2023 (No. 44 of 2023), <https://egazette.gov.in/WriteReadData/2023/250880.pdf>

becoming aware of such incident. Every telecommunication entity shall appoint a Chief Telecommunication Security Officer who shall be responsible for coordinating and ensuring compliance with the provisions of these rules.”

Context: The six-hour reporting window mirrors India’s existing [CERT-In cyber incident-reporting requirement](#) (in force since June 2022) and is materially shorter than the 72-hour breach-notification norm under the EU General Data Protection Regulation and the U.S. Cyber Incident Reporting for Critical Infrastructure Act, and the 24-hour early-warning requirement under the EU NIS2 Directive. If DNS infrastructure hosts were classified as “telecommunication entities” under the act, this obligation would apply to them. It is still unclear whether the act’s broad definition of “telecommunication services” will extend to DNS-related services.

Critical Telecommunication Infrastructure Rules (November 2024): “The Central Government may, by notification, designate any telecommunication network or part thereof as Critical Telecommunication Infrastructure. The designated entity shall report any security incident within six hours, maintain logs for a minimum period of two years, and comply with restrictions on remote access and maintenance by foreign entities.”¹⁷

Right of Way Rules (September 2024): “An online single-window portal shall be established with a standardized approval timeline for telecom infrastructure deployment, with deemed approval if not processed within the prescribed timeline.”¹⁸

TRAI issued recommendations on network authorization in February 2025. Critically, Sections 3 (service authorization) and 4 (spectrum assignment) of the act have not been notified as of the reporting date. In February 2025, the Department of Telecommunications also published the Draft Telecommunications (Authorisation for Telecommunication Network) Rules, 2025 for public consultation, which would establish a unified authorization framework replacing the existing licensing regime. If finalized, these rules would consolidate multiple service authorizations into a streamlined structure, potentially affecting how Internet-related services are classified and regulated.¹⁹

Digital Competition Bill, 2024

On 27 February 2024, the Report of the Committee on Digital Competition Law was issued, including a proposed draft Digital Competition Bill, 2024.²⁰ The bill has not been introduced in Parliament. The Standing Committee on Finance, [in its 25th Report presented to the Lok Sabha on 11 August 2025](#), recorded that the proposal is paused while the Ministry of Corporate Affairs reassesses the designation thresholds and their impact on startups and micro, small, and medium enterprises. The ministry has since commissioned a market study (November 2025) to re-examine the thresholds for Systemically Significant Digital Enterprises and the list of Core Digital Services; no timeline for revival has been set.

¹⁷ DoT, Telecommunications (Critical Telecommunication Infrastructure) Rules, 2024, notified November 2024.

¹⁸ DoT, Telecommunications (Right of Way) Rules, 2024, notified September 2024.

¹⁹ TRAI, Recommendations on Network Authorisation under Telecommunications Act 2023, February 2025, <https://www.trai.gov.in>

²⁰ The Report of the Committee on Digital Competition Law (2024), Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, 27 February 2024, <https://www.mca.gov.in>

The bill is expected to shape India's broader digital and Internet ecosystem and is followed by observers across the policy ecosystem.

Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill

On 10 November 2023, the draft Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill was proposed.²¹ The initial draft was subsequently withdrawn in August 2024 following pushback from media organizations, civil society groups, and the technology industry. A parliamentary committee urged reintroduction in March 2025, but no new draft has emerged to date.

India's Internet ecosystem and broader Internet governance stakeholders continue to follow this legislation with interest.

Social Media Age Restrictions

India's Economic Survey 2025–26, tabled in Parliament on 29 January 2026, flagged excessive smartphone and social media use among young people as a growing public health concern, linking it to anxiety, sleep disorders, and declining attention spans among the 15–24 age group.²² The survey recommended that platforms be made responsible for enforcing age verification and age-appropriate defaults for social media, gambling applications, autoplay features, and targeted advertising.

On 6 March 2026, Karnataka became the first Indian state to announce a ban on social media use for children under 16 years of age, announced by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in the state's 2026–27 budget speech.²³ Andhra Pradesh followed on the same day, with Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu announcing a commitment to restrict access for children under 13 within 90 days, while the state continues to deliberate whether the cutoff should be 13 or 16. The Central Government is understood to be considering a national framework with a graded, age bracket approach rather than a blanket ban. These developments are part of a broader global trend, especially in the APAC region, where Australia enacted the world's first nationwide under-16 social media ban in December 2025. Several other countries in the APAC region, including Indonesia and Malaysia, are considering or have already announced similar measures. Age verification requirements, if implemented through technical measures at the platform or network level, could have implications for identity management, DNS-level filtering, and the broader architecture of age-verification on the Internet.

Draft Digital India Act

On 9 March 2023, plans for the draft Digital India Act (DIA) were presented as a replacement for the Information Technology Act, 2000. The act was built on the Digital India Goals 2026, which envisioned India as a trusted player in global value chains. Among its stated goals, the DIA

²¹ The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Proposes Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill, 2023, New Delhi, 10 November 2023, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1976200>

²² Economic Survey 2025–26, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, tabled in Parliament on 29 January 2026. <https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/economicsurvey/>

²³ Government of Karnataka, Budget Speech 2026–27 by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, presented in the Karnataka Legislative Assembly on 6 March 2026; Government of Andhra Pradesh statement by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, 6 March 2026. Contemporaneous reporting: The Tribune (7 March 2026), Business Standard (6 March 2026), TechCrunch (6 March 2026)

sought to “ensure the Indian Internet is open, safe and trusted and accountable” while protecting citizens’ rights and addressing risks from emerging technologies. The DIA was expected to subsume the IT Rules, 2021 discussed above.²⁴

As of May 2026, no draft DIA has been released or introduced in Parliament. References to the DIA have largely disappeared from official announcements since mid-2025. MeitY Secretary S. Krishnan stated at the Assocham AI Leadership Meet on 16 December 2025: “As it is, we are a country with many laws. ...My own inclination always is to avoid putting in a new law, a new regulation, unless you absolutely have to. Try to see what we can do with existing law.”²⁵

India AI Governance Guidelines

In November 2025, MeitY released the India AI Governance Guidelines under the IndiaAI Mission.²⁶ The guidelines are a voluntary, principle-based framework [built on seven “Sutras”](#) (principles): Trust is the Foundation; People First; Innovation over Restraint; Fairness and Equity; Accountability; Understandable by Design; and Safety, Resilience, and Sustainability. The guidelines explicitly reject a stand-alone AI law at this stage. The framework’s emphasis on interoperability and open standards aligns with principles relevant to the DNS ecosystem.

Delhi High Court Judgment on Domain Name Registration Practices

On 24 December 2025, the Delhi High Court delivered a judgment in *Dabur India Limited v. Ashok Kumar & Ors.* (CS (COMM) 135/2022), a batch of commercial suits involving the misuse of domain names to impersonate well-known brands including Dabur, Tata Sky, Amul, Bajaj Finance, Meesho, Croma, Colgate, and ITC.²⁷ Justice Prathiba M. Singh issued a comprehensive set of directions aimed at tightening accountability across the domain name registration ecosystem. The court identified more than 1,100 infringing domain names during the proceedings, almost none of which were defended by any bona fide registrant. Key directions include:

Mandatory e-KYC: All domain name registrars offering services in India must undertake compulsory electronic know your customer (e-KYC) verification at the time of registration and conduct periodic reverification, in accordance with the CERT-In Circular dated 28 April 2022.

Restrictions on privacy-by-default: The court held that “offering of privacy by default to registrants is one of the reasons for proliferation of illegal domain names.” Registrars may offer privacy protection services only when explicitly requested by a registrant after completing verification.

²⁴ The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, Proposed Digital India Act, 2023, Digital India Dialogues, 9 March 2023, https://www.meity.gov.in/writereaddata/files/DIA_Presentation%2009.03.2023%20Final.pdf

²⁵ MeitY Secretary S. Krishnan, Assocham AI Leadership Meet, 16 December 2025, per PTI/MediaNama.

²⁶ MeitY, “India AI Governance Guidelines,” November 2025, <https://indiaai.gov.in>

²⁷ Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, India AI Governance Guidelines: Enabling Safe and Trusted AI Innovation, released under the IndiaAI Mission on 5 November 2025, <https://static.pib.gov.in/WriteReadData/specificdocs/documents/2025/nov/doc2025115685601.pdf>

72-hour disclosure obligation: Registrars must disclose verified registrant information (including name, address, mobile number, email, and payment details) to courts, law enforcement agencies, or legitimate right holders within 72 hours of a formal request.

Jurisdictional reach: The court held that registrars offering services to Indian users, earning revenue from India, and enabling activities with legal consequences within Indian territory cannot evade Indian legal standards. Service of court orders by email to a registrar's grievance officer was held to be valid and binding.

Government consultation: The court directed MeitY and DoT to explore the feasibility of uniform e-KYC norms for all domain name registrations offered to Indian users, irrespective of the registrar's place of incorporation, and to hold stakeholder consultations with registrars and registry operators.

Context: The judgment is relevant to ICANN's contracted parties operating in India because several of the court's directions introduce requirements that may overlap with what ICANN's Registrar Accreditation Agreement and consensus policies require. At the time of writing, the decision is under appeal.

GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK AND INTERNET GOVERNANCE ENGAGEMENT

Similar to many other countries, India is managing the challenges of digitalization, including the implications of emerging technologies and connecting the remaining approximately 30 percent of the population. India was cognizant that many of its past governance frameworks were substantially outdated (the Indian Telegraph Act of 1885, for instance, remained in force until 2024) and therefore embarked on a broad modernization effort in the early 2020s. This resulted in India amending existing regulations and drafting new ones to align with technology developments.

Through these transitions, India has demonstrated several governance practices worth noting: referencing existing regulations in countries and regions with more experience on the relevant issues; continually examining and improving its regulations to improve the ease of doing business; customizing regulations to fit its market's unique needs; and conducting multistakeholder public consultations before regulations are implemented.

On 15 October 2024, speaking at the inauguration of the [ITU World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly \(WTSA\) 2024](#) in New Delhi, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that "today, all the digital tools and applications operate beyond the boundaries and limitations of any country. No single country can protect its citizens from cyberthreats on its own. We must work together, and global institutions must take the responsibility," and, "The standards we set today will shape the direction of our future. Therefore, the principles of security, dignity, and equity should be at the centre of our discussions. Our goal should be to ensure that no country, no region, and no community is left behind in this digital age."²⁸

²⁸ Prime Minister's Office, Address at the inauguration of ITU-World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly 2024, <https://www.pmindia.gov.in>

On 16 December 2025, Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Jitin Prasada delivered India's national statement at the U.N. General Assembly WSIS+20 High-Level Meeting, [reaffirming India's commitment to the multistakeholder model of Internet governance](#). India also noted that the Common But Differentiated Responsibilities principle had not been reflected in the final outcome document (Resolution A/RES/80/173, adopted by consensus).

On 5 February 2026, in the [ICANN85 announcement](#), [Secretary S. Krishnan stated](#): "India's digital transformation is anchored in an open, secure, inclusive and resilient Internet. Hosting ICANN85 reflects India's commitment to the multistakeholder model of Internet governance and to advancing policy frameworks that support innovation, inclusion, and trust."²⁹

From the developments presented in this update, India's governance approach continues to evolve as the country manages the complexities of a rapidly expanding digital economy. ICANN, through its Government and IGO Engagement and Global Stakeholder Engagement teams, will continue to provide information to the ICANN community when regulatory developments in India touch on the aspects of technical Internet governance, have the potential to impact ICANN's mission, or could be of interest to broader Internet governance stakeholders.

²⁹ MeitY Secretary S. Krishnan, ICANN85 announcement, 5 February 2026, <https://www.icann.org/resources/press-material/release-2026-02-05-en>



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