



INTERNET GOVERNANCE - Background, Development and the Asian Perspective

SPEAKER: Mr. Samiran Gupta

CHAIR: Mr. Santosh Pai

DATE: 10th July 2019

VENUE: Seminar Room, ICS

Mr Samiran Gupta started by briefing us on the current scenario of internet connectivity across the world, especially in China and India. He highlighted that the Asia-Pacific region has an impressive number of users, with China and India leading the pack. However, he argued that India and China have inadequacies that are triggering various challenges for them to grow independently in the sphere of internet governance. This is majorly due to the Western dominance in the digital world and stringent government policies back in their home countries.

His presentation primarily focused on how small organisations like ICANN function to help build resilient internet governance. ICANN mainly focuses on deployment of root server nodes which often get blocked due to heavy traffic in the DNS server. It is mostly concerned with the transfusion of the core technologies to the DNS server to enhance global connectivity. They have adopted more of a multi-stakeholder approach. They control and bypass the domain name while working alongside other partners to uphold a more resilient

global connectivity. ICANN like organisations also propose policies and observe the movement of the Internet connectivity across the world. However they are not the policy makers.

Mr. Gupta also discussed how the meaning of privacy varies from nation to nation and thus impact governance systems. Countries like China have been developing their own coding system based on their native language, thus helping them enhance their security and control content. On the contrary, as India still struggles to have its own coding scripts and is highly dependent on the Western model of coding, it remains highly vulnerable to cyber-attacks.

The session ended with questions and discussions revolving around internet governance and its contemporary links-

- ✓ There is a larger need to adopt a transparent internet governance system and enhance internet mobility across borders. This calls in for both hi-tech bi-lateral and multilateral cooperation.
- ✓ The challenges surrounding data-localisation and data-penetration in countries like China and India which demands higher standards of co-regulation and collations while adhering to their own government policies.
- ✓ The future trajectories of 'internet economy' in India and China.

China and India which have the largest number of internet users need to step up and look forward to developing their own technologies so as to break the monopoly of the West in internet governance and adopt a more transparent medium.

This report was prepared by Annesha Bhattacharjee, Research Intern, Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi

Disclaimer

This report is a summary produced for purposes of dissemination and for generating wider discussion. All views expressed here should be understood to be those of the speakers(s) and individual participants, and not necessarily of the Institute of Chinese Studies.
