Internet Governance

Why in news?

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Brazilian society celebrates three years of the enactment of the **Internet Bill of Rights (Marco Civil da Internet).**

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Internet Bill of Rights:

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It is the **first ever national law** to "establish principles, guarantees, rights and obligations for the use of the Internet" and has been praised internationally for its progressive nature.

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What is the significance?

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- The Bill has brought transparency and legal security to the Brazilian digital landscape.
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- With the current legislation, any request of an Internet user to remove personal information from social media or website must be promptly honoured.
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- Moreover, the so-called **metadata**—for example, information about one's date and time of access—must be stored under absolute secrecy by telecommunication providers and may only be disclosed in response to a court order.
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- The Bill of Rights has also affirmed the principle of network neutrality.
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- The Brazilian Marco Civil is not only a product of lawmakers, but of Brazilian society as a whole.
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- Its original idea stems from protests of civil society organizations against an Internet criminalization draft Bill that would typify crimes such as illegal downloads, electronic financial fraud and paedophilia.
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- Cyber activists claimed that before criminalizing Internet users' behaviour, their rights and responsibilities had to be defined.
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What is going on in the international arena?

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- Brazil is the only country to have hosted the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) twice [Rio de Janeiro (2007) and Joao Pessoa (2015)].
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- This was the first ever multi-stakeholder **"bottom-up" process** to agree on a set of Internet governance principles and a road map for the future evolution of the Internet.
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- Within ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers)—the California-based company responsible for managing the Internet "address book"—Brazil has been vocal in defending the suppression of its unilateral command.
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- And in the context of the UN Human Rights Council, Brazil and Germany have proposed a resolution on the principle that "the same rights that people have offline must also be protected online".
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- The resolution ultimately resulted in the establishment of **the role of the special rapporteur on the right to privacy,** whose final report is expected to be released in 2018.
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- During the 10-year review of the **World Summit of Information Society (WSIS+10), in New York,** in December 2015, Brazil, together with India and other delegations, played a key role in overcoming the traditional polarization between countries that either only support multi-stakeholderism

or otherwise defend an exclusive intergovernmental management of the Internet.
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What is the way ahead?

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- While cyber security matters require the leadership of governments, given their legal implications, topics such as the coordination of critical Internet resources are better treated under a multi-sectoral scheme.
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- Similarly, the definition of Internet communication standards should be guided by the private sector and academic/engineering bodies, due to their technical capabilities, while transnational electronic trade rules need to be deliberated under a multilateral arrangement.
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Source: Live Mint

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