

## Securing Data Streams

### What is the issue?

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- Cambridge Analytica fiasco has highlighted the risks and challenges in safeguarding privacy and preventing data abuse.

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- Mandating big foreign tech firms to set up data centres within Indian jurisdiction and nurturing indigenous firms are some possible solutions.

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### What is the current status?

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- **Vulnerabilities** - Recent developments with respect to “Cambridge Analytica” raise some questions on how the Government can protect data.

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- Although the Government claims data is safe, the sheer massiveness of foreign companies like Facebook, Google, Amazon or Apple is menacing.

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- Notably, the above 4 are the main firms driving big-data technologies in the country and globally and are almost omnipotent in all gadgets.

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- **Government Response** - So far, India has shown no signs of doing anything to control them and the data protection law is still in its nascence.

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- Past experiences haven't been positive either, and even protocols issues to government departments regarding cyber security are not complied with.

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- Notably, government departments were asked to not use Gmail for official purposes, and '.nic.in' was promoted instead, but compliance has been tardy.

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### What is the way ahead?

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- **Data Centres** - If Indian data doesn't remain within India's borders, it can't be subject to Indian laws, which makes regulating them really tough.
- Data breaches will only expand in future and India is expected to be the centre of expansion for tech giants due its youthful population.
- Due to these transgressions, government should ask these tech giants to set up their data centres in India, which won't be a big investment for them.
- Despite the minimal taxes that these firms would face, they've refused to set up data centres sighting trivial problems like electricity and land acquisition.
- **Indigenisation** - The Government has also been talking about creating big home grown tech firms, but it's been years now.
- Notably, China has been successful in this domain with firms like "WeChat and Baidu", to counter international tech giants.
- We must back big India-owned e-commerce and mobility players to fight the Amazons and Ubers of the world.

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**Source: Business Line**

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