

WRITE TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MEDIA AND TELECOMMUNICATION, FEBRUARY 2024

NEW DELHI

C-2/39
SAFDARJUNG DEVELOPMENT AREA
NEW DELHI - 110016 | INDIA

MUMBAI

604, 6TH FLOOR, CHAMBERS,
208, NARIMAN POINT,
MUMBAI-400021 | INDIA

BENGALURU

316, 3RD FLOOR RAHEJA CHAMBERS,
NO. 12, MUSEUM ROAD,
BENGALURU - 560001 | INDIA

A. TECHNOLOGY

Google partners with fact-checkers and publications to combat misinformation ahead of general elections:

Google has announced a new partnership with Shakti, an Indian fact-checking collective, to help news publishers detect and debunk false claims. The goal is to create a centralised repository of fact-checks that can be easily accessed by publishers. Google will also provide training to equip publishers and fact-checkers with the latest verification tools and techniques including advanced fact-checking methods, deepfake detection, and products like Fact Check Explorer. [READMORE:](#)



Google starts delisting Indian apps for non-compliance with Play Store norms:

Google delisted several prominent apps by ten Indian developers from its marketplace Play Store for “non-compliance with billing policies”, triggering fresh conflict with a number of local internet firms that have been in disagreement with Google over the policies that firms term as “unfair” policies. The delisted apps include Bharat Matrimony, Shaadi.com, video-streaming platform Altt by Balaji Telefilms, audio streaming and podcast app Kuku FM amongst other applications. [READMORE:](#)



IAMAI forms task force to tackle Big Tech dominance:

Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) has formed a task force to address the alleged abuse of market dominance by big tech firms. The chairman of the task force Mr. Murugavel Janakiraman stated that the task force will deal with issues surrounding Google Play Billing System and intellectual property related matters in the beginning, and then take up broader concerns surrounding big tech and their abuse of dominance in India. [READMORE:](#)



Draft AI regulation framework to be released by July:

While addressing the opening session of the Nasscom leadership summit, Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, has indicated that the government is working on a draft artificial intelligence (AI) regulation framework which would release by June or July, 2024. The intention of such regulations is to harness AI for economic growth and address potential risks and harms. [READMORE:](#)



Elon Musk sues OpenAI and CEO Sam Altman for breach of contract:

Elon Musk has sued OpenAI and its chief executive Sam Altman, among others, in San Francisco accusing them of breaching contractual agreements made when he helped found OpenAI in 2015. The lawsuit states that the CEO Sam Altman and Greg Brockman, originally approached Musk to make an open-source, non-profit company that would develop artificial intelligence technology for the “benefit of humanity”. As per the lawsuit, the Company’s focus on seeking profits breaks that agreement. [READMORE:](#)

Media groups sue Google for €2.1 billion, alleging abuse of dominant position:

Alphabet's Google was sued for €2.1 billion euros in Netherlands by a group of 32 media groups including Axel Springer and Schibsted alleging that they suffered losses due to a less competitive market, which is a direct result of Google's misconduct through its digital advertising practices. The media companies have stated that, in absence of Google's abuse of its dominant position in the market, media companies would have received significantly higher revenues from advertising and paid lower fees for ad tech services. [READMORE:](#)



Bombay High Court delivers a split verdict on several petitions challenging the amended IT Rules:

The Bombay High Court delivered a split verdict on the pleas seeking to strike down Rules 3(i)(II)(A) G (C) of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules, 2023 which empower the Central government to establish a fact-checking unit (FCU) to identify any 'fake, false or misleading' information about its business on social media platforms. While Justice Gautam has ruled in favour of the petitioners and struck down the amendment citing the provisions to be arbitrary and leading to censorship which would have a damaging effect on free speech, Justice Neela Gokhale dismissed the petitions and upheld the constitutionality of the provisions stating that no content is restrained under the said provisions unless it is patently false and passed off as a statement of truth. A third judge – Justice Atul S Chandurkar has been assigned to give an opinion on the split verdict. [READMORE:](#) [READMORE:](#)

B. MEDIA



Stakeholders meet to constitute One-Window Music Copyright Licensing Regime:

All stakeholders in music industry viz. IPRS (Indian Performing Rights Society), PPL (Phonographic Performance Limited), RMPL (Recorded Music Performance Limited), Novex, CINEFIL, IMI (Indian Music Industry) met to constitute One-Window Music Copyright Licensing Regime with the intent of increasing copyright compliance along with ease of doing business being made available to end users. [READMORE:](#)



Reliance Industries, Disney announce \$8.5 billion media joint venture:

Reliance Industries and Walt Disney have announced the merger of their India TV and streaming media assets, creating a joint venture (JV) that will serve shows and sports to users in India and abroad. As part of the transaction, the media undertaking of Viacom18 will be merged into Star India Private Limited. Together, the Reliance-Disney merged entity will have 120 TV channels and two streaming platforms. Mrs. Nita Ambani will chair the board of the combined entity and Mr. Uday Shankar, former Disney executive, would serve as vice chair. [READMORE:](#)



Sony formally withdraws agreement to merge India operations with Zee from NCLT:

Sony Pictures Networks India withdrew its application in National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) regarding the merger of its business with Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd (Zee) following a stalemate over who would lead the merged entity. Sony entities Culver Max and Bangla Entertainment had also terminated their merger agreement with Zee citing unfulfilled conditions, and sought a \$90 million termination fee from Zee. Upon termination of the deal by Sony, Zee moved NCLT and the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) against Sony's termination of the merger deal. [READMORE:](#)

CBI moves court over Netflix's docu-series on Indrani Mukerjea:

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) moved an application before a special court in Mumbai seeking a stay on a Netflix documentary series based on Indrani Mukerjea, the prime accused in the Sheena Bora murder case till the conclusion of the ongoing trial. The court rejected the CBI plea stating that the court did not have the authority to halt broadcasting of the series.

[READMORE:](#)

THE INDRANI MUKERJEA STORY
BURIED TRUTH



Bombay High Court dismisses CBI application to stay release of Netflix docu-series on Indrani Mukerjea:

The Bombay High Court dismissed CBI's plea seeking a stay on airing of the documentary 'The Indrani Mukerjea Story: Buried Truth' clearing the way for streaming platform Netflix to release the same. The High Court remarked that it had viewed the series and prima facie could not find anything that goes against the prosecution. Earlier, the documentary was scheduled to release on February 23, 2024, however, the court had taken an undertaking from Netflix that it wouldn't release the documentary till February 29 and directed Netflix to arrange for a special screening for the CBI so that it is not prejudiced in any way since the trial was ongoing. [READMORE:](#)



Vishesh Films moves Delhi High Court over IP rights in Aashiqui Film franchise:

In a lawsuit against Super Cassettes Industries (T-Series), film production company Vishesh Films Private Limited, has alleged that T-Series is "unilaterally exploiting ownership" over the Aashiqui franchise and has taken steps towards making a third instalment of the film despite both parties having 'joint ownership in the intellectual property rights of the Aashiqui Franchise'. Vishesh Films Private Limited and T-Series had co-produced the Aashiqui franchise films i.e., Aashiqui and Aashiqui 2. [READMORE:](#)



C. TELECOMMUNICATIONS

TRAI releases new rules mandating telecom companies to identify callers:

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) released its final set of recommendations to introduce caller identification (caller ID) as a default feature across domestic telecommunications networks. The final set of recommendations proposed that all telcos "should provide Calling Name Presentation" as a "supplementary service" to customers "upon their request." [READMORE:](#)



TRAI releases Consultancy Paper on 'Assignment of Additional Spectrum to Indian Railways for its Safety and Security Applications':

In the consultation paper, TRAI sought stakeholder views on whether an additional 5 MHz (paired) spectrum in the 700 MHz band should be assigned to Indian Railways for its requirement related to safety and security applications, and whether spectrum harmonization is needed to make the radio waves assigned to Railways, and NCRTC and other RRTS/ Metro Rail Networks contiguous. [READMORE:](#)

DoT working on norms for satcom spectrum allocation:

According to reports, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) is finalising the modalities around administrative allocation of satellite spectrum, which is likely to include clauses such as that airwaves will only be given to offer services through a fixed terminal. It is reported that the license would have terms and conditions to clarify that the spectrum taken administratively can't be used to serve retail mobile consumers. [READMORE:](#)



DoT mulls waiving 5G minimum rollout fine:

According to reports, DoT is deliberating to waive off the penalty for not meeting minimum roll out obligations for the 26 GHz (millimeter wave band) 5G spectrum as the ecosystem is yet to be developed. The Department had issued show cause notices to Vodafone Idea and Adani Data Networks for non-compliance of the minimum requirements of rolling out 5g networks, however, upon receiving the response of these companies citing lack of ecosystem as a reason for non-compliance, DoT is reconsidering about the penalty to be levied for non-compliance by such telecom companies.

[READMORE:](#)



Government to form panel to draft guidelines to check pesky calls:

The government may consider regulating or issuing guidelines to over-the-top channels like WhatsApp to combat the rise of pesky calls and messages. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs led detailed discussions with the Department of Consumer Affairs on the issue of spam calls and how they are now switching to internet calls, especially using WhatsApp to mislead consumers. The meeting concluded by proposing a committee to draft guidelines for regulating and checking pesky calls. [READMORE:](#)