

## **N1. India's electronics manufacturing can gain from China's loss, says Prasad**

*Business Standard. 29 April 2020*

*Prasad said India has the opportunity to promote electronics manufacturing and urged states to work towards attracting investments. In a meeting with state IT ministers, he said In a meeting with state IT ministers, he said... therefore, my departments — **National Informatics Centre** and **National E-Governance Division** — will come up with an app in three-four days times.*

China's loss could be India's gain in the ongoing pandemic, according to Minister of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) Ravi Shankar Prasad, who held a videoconference with state information technology (IT) ministers on Tuesday.

Prasad said India has the opportunity to promote [electronics manufacturing](#) and urged states to work towards attracting investments. As more and more manufacturers look to shift base from China, India's recent electronics incentives could become an attraction for them.

India's recently announced production linked incentive 2.0, [electronics manufacturing](#) clusters, and scheme for promotion of manufacturing of electronic components and semiconductors, are schemes with a project outlay of Rs 50,000 crore and seek to attract investments in [electronics manufacturing](#) sector.

In addition, the minister said the government would extend Department of Telecommunications' (DoT's) deadline on relaxation of norms for work from home from April 30 to July 31.

The DoT had given the nod to software services body National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom) last month to allow IT unit employees, mostly from business process management firms, to work from home until April 30.

The issue dates back to a clause in the earlier telecom policy under which certain kinds of work (such as voice calls) cannot be shifted to employees' residential premises. However, given the advent of technology, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India had suggested doing away with the clause to allow work from home for business process outsourcing employees.

The government is also monitoring online media platforms' compliance with the government's call to remove and monitor fake [news](#) and misinformation. "My officers are monitoring it. The companies have said they have made good progress; they have removed many of the contents that were seeking to inflame passions and also roadblocks in the fight against Covid-19. If there is any digression, they'll have to pay consequences, whether at central or state level, including police action," he told reporters in a videoconference following the meeting.

In a meeting with state IT ministers, he said, "I reinforced teamwork, sharing the best practices of the Government of India and state governments, and therefore, my departments — **National Informatics Centre** and **National e-Governance Division** — will come up with an app in three-four days. I also suggested we have a strategic group of the central government, state governments, IT ministers, and some of the best minds from the IT profession, so that we can leverage ideas."

The minister also outlined further plans for the government's Covid-19 contact-tracing app Aarogya Setu. Prasad said the data from Aarogya Setu app should be made available online to states, right up to the district-level officials. He also announced an interactive voice recording system solution is being developed by the DoT and IIT-Madras for feature phone users, given that a substantial number of users still use feature phones in the country. The feature will be launched soon, added Prasad. He also asked MeitY to explore the possibility of integrating a system for issuing ePass during lockdown with Aarogya Setu — a demand from a few states.

**News Source:** [https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-s-electronics-manufacturing-can-gain-from-china-s-loss-says-prasad-120042801501\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-s-electronics-manufacturing-can-gain-from-china-s-loss-says-prasad-120042801501_1.html)

## **N2. Another crisis for health staff: April pay may be delayed too**

*Times of India. 29 April 2020*

*The software system was initially with Tata Consultancy Services. Its 10-year contract expired on March 31. Now, we have shifted to **national informatics centre** of the government of India.*

LUDHIANA: A week after the TOI highlighted that several civil hospital doctors, nurses and other healthcare staff have not received their March pay, it now appears that they will not receive their April salaries too on time, with the state finance department freezing and delaying their remuneration till further orders.

A letter from the finance department states, “All drawing and disbursing officers (DDOs) are instructed that due to technical issues in new integrated financial management system (IFMS), April salary bill will not be accepted. DDOs will be informed further about the acceptance of bills.”

Some of the employees are working double shift under critical conditions due to the pandemic. It has been 28 days that March salaries have not been credited to their accounts, making it difficult for them to make ends meet. They alleged that the last time too, their salaries were credited a month later.

A doctor working in the Covid-19 wing of the civil hospital said, “The month is about to end, and none of the doctors has received March salaries. My family that is dependent on me is also facing economic hardships. We don’t have money to meet daily expenses, like fuel and utility bills, EMIs of house and car. Now, we cannot afford further delay in salaries.”

Another doctor, who is staying in a hotel provided by the administration, said, “We are not living with families and it has been more than 14 days that I have not met my loved ones. We work for 15 days and for the remaining 15 stay in a hotel under quarantine. It is difficult for me to survive without salary. My colleagues are also under financial strain. We urge the government to be considerate towards frontline workers and release their pays on time.”

Drawing and dispersing officer in the civil surgeon office Pankaj Jaitley said, “The IFMS software is updating, so submission of staff attendance for April will take time. The technical team is working on it and once the problem is solved, we will start accepting staff attendance. There are almost 600 officials at the civil surgeon office and more than 80% have received their March salaries. A few falling under the new pension scheme have not received pay due to technical glitches. After the snag is cleared, they will also receive their March pay.”

Health minister Balbir Singh Sidhu asked the TOI to speak with finance minister Manpreet Badal, but his number was switched off. The FM’s PA asked to contact director, treasury and accounts, Dr Abhinav Trikha.

Director, treasury and account, Dr Abhinav Trikha said, “Due to curfew and lockdown, many of the officials are not at their appointed place and unable to submit their attendance. The software system was initially with Tata Consultancy Services. Its 10-year contract expired on March 31. Now, we have shifted to national informatics centre of the government of India. We have around Rs 2,000 crore of salaries and dispersal of around Rs 1,600-1,700 crore has been done. Most of them will get their salaries and only few may face issues. Due to curfew, we did away with physical submission of attendance form for officials within 10 km of civil hospital.”

Other department employees who have not received their March salaries include interns of the Punjab Roadways as well as teachers of state education department.

News Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/ludhiana/another-crisis-for-health-staff-april-pay-may-be-delayed-too/articleshow/75438800.cms>

### **N3. App to check on home-quarantined, teams**

*Telegraph India. 29 April 2020*

*Details of surveillance team members (with smartphones) were also fed into the portal. Kamrup (metro) deputy commissioner Biswajit Pegu, being faced with such a scenario, requested the **National Informatics Centre (NIC)** to provide an ..*

he Kamrup (metro) district administration has started to use a mobile app-based solution called COVID Suraksha from Tuesday to monitor the status of each of the home-quarantined persons and the activities of the surveillance teams round the clock.

Official sources in the metro district administration said that the move was initiated to keep a constant check on the health of those in home quarantine.

“It was felt that an appropriate system should be developed to monitor these quarantined people on a daily basis in order to keep an eye on their health. Though each quarantined person was assigned to a surveillance team consisting of health workers, there was no proper mechanism available with the district administration to monitor the functioning of the surveillance team — whether they have visited each of the quarantined members,” an official source said.

Kamrup (metro) deputy commissioner Biswajit Pegu, being faced with such a scenario, requested the National Informatics Centre (NIC) to provide an IT-based solution. Subsequently, the NIC, Assam, suggested that a mobile app-based solution called COVID Suraksha may be used for this purpose.

The software has two parts — one is a web-based application portal and the other is the mobile app.

First, details of each of the quarantined members were collected and entered in the portal as part of the registration process.

Similarly, details of surveillance team members (with smartphones) were also fed into the portal.

“On completion of the registration process, a QR code for each quarantined member was generated from the portal. The QR codes were then printed and pasted on the front of the house of each of the quarantined members. The surveillance team during its visit will scan the QR code of the quarantined member and fill a simplified questionnaire about patient’s health, whether he or she has fever or cough and send the same directly to the server using the app. The district administration can now view the status of each quarantined member from the dashboard,” said an official statement from the metro administration. The technology at present covers 2,169 people in home quarantine in the city.

**News Source:** <https://www.telegraphindia.com/states/north-east/coronavirus-covid-suraksha-app-to-check-on-home-quarantined-teams-in-guwahati/cid/1768821>

#### **N4. Centre makes 'Aarogya Setu' App must for govt staff, asks them to check status before starting for office**

*The Statesman- 29 April 2020*

*The Central government staff have also been advised that in case the App shows a message that he/she has a 'moderate' or 'high risk', then the concerned individual should not report to office and self-isolate for 14 days or till the status becomes 'safe' or 'low risk'.... application developed by the **National Informatics Centre** that comes under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, government of India.*

As India's death toll due to the novel Coronavirus crossed the 1000-mark and the total cases topped 31,000, the Government on Wednesday issued orders making the downloading of the 'Aarogya Setu' App mandatory for all Central government staff.

For the safety of all government officials, Union Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions on Wednesday issued an order for all Central government employees to "immediately" download Aarogya Setu App on their mobile phones.

The employees have been further asked to review their status on the mobile application before starting for office and commute only when the App shows 'safe' or 'low risk' status.

**News Source:** <https://www.thestatesman.com/india/centre-makes-aarogya-setu-app-must-govt-staff-asks-check-status-starting-office-1502882114.html>

## **N5. Now send urgent RTIs to E-mail IDs of Info Officers, says Central Information Commission**

*New Indian Express. 29 April 2020*

*The order was passed following a complaint made by a former DU student and advocate Mohit Kumar Gupta. CIC has asked the Department Of Personnel and Training (DOPT) and **National Informatics Centre (NIC)** to provide an online platform for citizens who were struggling to file RTI applications under the 'Life or Liberty' provision.*

NEW DELHI: Keeping in mind the ongoing lockdown, the Central Information Commission has directed all public authorities in the country to create dedicated unique e-mail IDs of Public Information Officers so that citizens can file urgent e-RTI applications without depending on the resumption of postal services.

The CIC has asked the Department Of Personnel and Training (DOPT) and National Informatics Centre (NIC) to provide an online platform for citizens who were struggling to file RTI applications under the 'Life or Liberty' provision.

Currently, the citizens filed RTI applications manually through pen paper and posting them and then wait for 30 days as per the usual RTI procedures even in matters of grave emergencies. This wait period is now extended due to the ongoing lockdown. The order was passed following a complaint made by a former DU student and advocate Mohit Kumar Gupta.

“The Commission observed that the concern raised a much larger issue and access to information must be a priority. All the public authorities need to understand the essence of life and liberty. Due to the ongoing pandemic in the country and the prevalent lockdown, the Commission finds it appropriate to highlight the issue of Section 7 (1) implementation by citizens more so, when postal receipt of RTI applications are minimal, in such situations all public authorities should encourage RTI applications through e-mail in case of life and liberty matter,” read the order passed by CIC. As per the order, Central Public Information Officers (CPIOs) of all government organisations will create a unique e-mail ID and disclose it on their respective website. A method of online acceptance of RTI fees will also be developed. CIC has further said the procedure can be explored in the normal RTI portal.

“The CIC has asked the secretary of DoPT to submit the action taken report to the Commission within seven days from the date of withdrawal of lockdown.” “The CIC order is historic. However, I expect more awareness to be imparted about extent and limitations regarding bonafide use of the provision of 'Life or Liberty,’” said Gupta.

What is 'Life and Liberty' provision?

The 'Life and Liberty' provisions comes under Section 7, Right to Information Act 2005. It says that when the information sought relates to life or liberty of a person, then the Public Information Officer of the public authority concerned should provide the information within 48 hours of the receipt of the Right to Information Act applications

News Source: <https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/delhi/2020/apr/29/now-send-urgent-rtis-to-e-mail-ids-of-info-officers-says-central-information-commission-2136834.html>



## **N6. Kamrup (M) District introduced COVID Suraksha app to observe people on home quarantine**

*The Sentinel Assam- 29 April 2020*

*Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup (Metro) having confronted with such scenario, requested the National Informatics Centre (NIC) to provide an IT based solution ...*

**GUWAHATI:** In view of the outbreak of COVID-19, home quarantine is a necessary step to contain the spread. But it was also felt that an appropriate system should be developed to monitor these quarantined people on a daily basis in order to keep an eye on their health. In this regard, the Kamrup (Metro) District has introduced a Mobile App based solution called COVID Suraksha, which may be used for this purpose.

The District Administration had formed Surveillance Teams consisting of members of ASHA, ANM and MPW (Multipurpose Worker). Each quarantined citizen was assigned one Surveillance team. But there was no proper mechanism available with the District Administration to monitor the functioning of the Surveillance team i.e whether they have visited each of the quarantined members. Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup (Metro) having confronted with such scenario, requested the National Informatics Centre (NIC) to provide an IT based solution. NIC, Assam State Centre suggested that COVID Suraksha may be used for this purpose. It has already been successfully implemented in Hojai district of ASSAM. The software has two parts – one is a web based application portal and the other is the mobile app. The solution is a simple, user friendly and most effective one. At first, details of each of the quarantined members were collected and entered in the portal as a part of registration process, QR Code for each of the quarantined members were generated from the portal. The QR Code were printed and pasted on the front of the house of each of the quarantined members. The Surveillance Team during their visit will scan the QR code of the Quarantined members and fill a simplified questionnaire about patient's health whether having fever, cough etc. and send the same directly to the server using the app. The Kamrup Metro District Administration can now view the status of each of the quarantined member, submitted by the Surveillance Team members, from the Dashboard.

COVID Suraksha has been successfully rolled out in the Kamrup Metropolitan district, in collaboration with the district units of NHM and IDSP and at present covers 2,169 persons under home quarantine.

*News Source: <https://www.sentinelassam.com/guwahati-city/kamrup-m-district-introduced-covid-suraksha-app-to-observe-people-on-home-quarantine/>*



## **N7. NEGD, NIC to develop app for states to share strategies to combat COVID-19**

*New Kerala. 29 April 2020*

*... Division (NEGD) and National Informatics Centre (NIC) to prepare an app where the best strategies of all states to contain COVID-19 pandemic can be shared.*

**The Central government on Tuesday asked National E-Governance Division (NEGD) and National Informatics Centre (NIC) to prepare an app where the best strategies of all states to contain COVID-19 pandemic can be shared.**

This has been done after the Bihar Chief Minister Sushil Modi suggested the government to prepare the app to contain the spread of COVID-19.

"I have asked the National E-Governance Division (NEGD) and National Informatics Centre (NIC) to prepare an app. Both NEGD and NIC have agreed to develop an app in 3 days," Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad told ANI.

"Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Modi has requested to develop an app where the best strategies of all states to contain COVID-19 pandemic will be shared. We have accepted this suggestion," Prasad added.

*News Source: <https://www.newkerala.com/news/2020/75047.htm>*

### **M1. Telcos, DoT in sync with states to track movement of Covid-19 patients**

*Economic Times. 27 April 2020*

*Privacy experts, however, said such sharing still triggers concerns around data privacy since no permission has been sought from subscribers. ... like the ministry of **electronics and information technology** (MeitY), state and central government to tackle Covid-19," added an official quoted above.*

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and mobile phone operators are working in tandem with state governments to use call data of subscribers to closely track the movement of Covid-19 positive patients, besides keeping a close watch on millions of migrant labourers to help them with food and find employment.

Mumbai: The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and mobile phone operators are working in tandem with state governments to use call data of subscribers to closely track the movement of Covid-19 positive patients, besides keeping a close watch on millions of migrant labourers to help them with food and find employment.

But officials clarified that only location details of calls were being used for the purpose, and not the detailed call data records (CDRs), which may have raised concerns around privacy and state surveillance.

Privacy experts, however, said such sharing still triggers concerns around data privacy since no permission has been sought from subscribers.

"If a patient moves away from his quarantine location, it means he has moved away from his geofencing area and alerts go out to agencies including police," said an official aware of the work done by different government bodies on Covid-19.

"The DoT is also tracking the cell sites of the patients and places they visited for 15 days prior to being tested positive. This helps to check up on those who have come in contact with the patient," added the official.

The DoT is also tracking millions of migrants as they head back to their home towns, using call data. According to officials, migrants from Mumbai, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Surat, Pune and a few other cities are being traced and state governments are alerted, so that food supplies can be sent. "These migrants can then be also directed for work in areas of agriculture, etc in those areas."

This ongoing exercise though has been a strain on telcos who have to provide data of cell towers, etc. of people at short notice.

"Large number of data is being asked for and we do not have access to caller locations etc on our laptops. Also, there are security checks we have to do before giving away such data," said a senior executive at one of the three private operators, who did not want to be named.

Vodafone Idea, Bharti Airtel and Reliance Jio did not respond to ET's queries and nor did Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), the industry body that represents the three operators.

“Where is the transparency, who has access to this data, what data is anonymised and who is it shared with? Also, why is this being done without informing and where is consent of people whose information including geo location is being taken,” said Nikhil Pahwa, data privacy and net neutrality activist. “Cell tower locations are based on signal strength and can be widely inaccurate.”

This is the second time in the last few months that DoT has sought caller data in massive numbers from telcos. Last time around in February, telcos strongly protested DoT's move, shooting off letters to flag concerns around privacy. But in March, DoT refuted allegations that call data records (CDRs) sought from carriers was a breach of privacy and amounted to surveillance, saying that the details will be used to study poor network quality, call drops and cross connection complaints.

News Source: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-news/telcos-dot-in-sync-with-states-to-track-patients/articleshow/75395651.cms>



## **M2. Industry seeks 6% production linked incentive for electronics ...**

*Livemint- 29 April 2020*

*The industry body made the recommendation in a meeting with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) on Wednesday. The body asked ...*

MAIT reiterated the industry's ongoing lobbying efforts for the government to include ICT (Information and Communication Technology) and mobile products as essential services. In a statement to the press, George Pal, CEO of MAIT, said, "This is very critical if India is not to tie the hands of its people and industry when restarting the economy."

The industry wants the government to take "a phased approach", allowing retail to open in semi-urban areas, towns and through e-commerce in metro areas. "Enterprise ICT sector catering to Data Centers and Control Rooms can be opened up fully as it has limited public interface and will not compromise the fight against covid," Pal said.

Reports have indicated that supply issues stemming from shutdowns in China due to the covid-19 pandemic have forced companies to look at other countries as alternatives. With India being one of the largest markets in the world, and the government's focus on making products here, many have said this could be an opportunity for the country.

The industry though has been at a standstill for over a month now, due to nationwide lockdowns thanks to the pandemic. Industry bodies like MAIT and the India Cellular Electronics Association (ICEA) have written to the government to allow the sale and service of such products amid lockdowns in the countrywide lockdowns.

News Source: <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/industry-seeks-6-production-linked-incentive-for-electronics-manufacturing-11588158204369.html>

### **M3. MeitY Relaxes VPN Connectivity Norms For IT Cos Till July 31**

*Inc42 Media- 29 April 2020*

*The government had earlier relaxed VPN norms till April 30. MeitY will also focus on strengthening BSNL BharatNet to provide better internet facilities.*

With no letup in the number of Covid-19 cases across the country and the prospects of returning to offices looking bleak, the information technology ministry has extended relaxed VPN connectivity norms for IT companies till July 31. The move is likely to simplify work from home for IT companies.

Union minister for information technology (IT) Ravi Shankar Prasad said on [Twitter](#) that in response to IT Industry's request to facilitate work from home for open settlement protocol, the department of telecommunications had relaxed terms and conditions for VPN till July 31 after discussions.

Earlier, companies were not allowed to connect office VPN to home infrastructure, a rule that was subsequently relaxed in view of the pandemic. Currently, over 90% of the IT workforce is [working from home](#) and only those performing critical functions are going to offices.

Industry body NASSCOM said the decision to extend the timelines on relaxed norms for other service providers (OSPs) to facilitate work from home will help IT and BPO firms to plan their strategy of bringing back workforce to offices, in a gradual and phased manner.

The report highlighted that the sectors under focus include electronics, organic chemicals, medical equipment, electrical machinery and plastic products.

The IT Ministry has also invited companies and startups to develop [indigenous video conferencing solutions](#) to enable smooth remote operations as well as teleconferencing between agencies and state governments. The government will offer INR 5 Lakhs to 10 shortlisted startups to develop a prototype of the product. Once approved, the shortlisted startups will be granted INR 20 Lakhs to develop the final product. In total, the IT Ministry has set aside INR 2.3 Cr for the same.

Backing the work from home trend, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said that several businesses have opted for it and are going embracing technology to take up digital-first approach.

News Source: <https://inc42.com/buzz/meity-relaxes-vpn-connectivity-norms-for-it-cos-till-july-31/>

#### **M4. Aadhaar cards can now also be updated at 20,000 CSCs in a major relief to rural citizens**

*Hindustan Times-28-Apr-2020*

*Union Minister for Communications, MEITY and Law and Justice Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad tweeted to convey the development. Prasad requested the CSCs to ...*

The Indian government on Tuesday enlisted the 20,000 common service centres (CSCs) in rural areas across the country for Aadhaar updates which is likely to provide relief to the population in the hinterlands that are located close to CSCs but are far from banks and post offices.

The facility to update one's Aadhaar record at 20,000 CSCs is likely to start by June end, which is the deadline set for the centres to upgrade their services. CSCs are a special purpose vehicle (SPV) that operate as banking correspondents in the rural parts of the country and come under the ministry of IT and electronics.

Union Minister for Communications, MEITY and Law and Justice Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad tweeted to convey the development.

Prasad requested the CSCs to handle Aadhaar work with responsibility and as per the instructions issued by UIDAI. He added that this move will help a large number of rural citizens to get Aadhaar services closer to their homes.

UIDAI or Unique Identification Authority of India has set a June deadline for the CSCs to begin handling Aadhaar work after an upgrade to their existing infrastructure and other necessary approvals.

CSC CEO Dr Dinesh Tyagi has asked CSCs to immediately undertake technical and other up-gradation required for starting Aadhaar updates.

Dr Tyagi said it would further strengthen the efforts of achieving the goals of "Digital India" as envisaged by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

So far Aadhaar enrolment and updation facility was available at select banks, post office

News Source: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/aadhaar-cards-can-now-also-be-updated-at-20-000-cscs-in-a-major-relief-to-rural-citizens/story-dYBgzxchMxqdPbO3hIbtQP.html>

## **M5. WhatsApp sees 70pc dip in highly forwarded messages after new cap**

*The Indian Express-28-Apr-2020*

*WhatsApp has informed Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) that the move has reduced “highly forwarded messages” by 70 per cent, it is ..*

WhatsApp’s [recent cap limiting frequently-forwarded messages](#) from being sent to more than one person at a time seems to be slowing down the virality of these posts. WhatsApp has informed the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) that the move has reduced “highly forwarded messages” by 70 per cent, it is learnt.

In early April, MeitY had asked TikTok, Helo, and [Facebook](#) to send across daily reports detailing the measures they have taken to prevent the spread of misinformation on their platform.

Nearly two weeks after it introduced this new cap of frequently forwarded messages, a WhatsApp Spokesperson said: “Since putting into place this new limit, globally there has been a 70 per cent reduction in the number of highly forwarded messages sent on WhatsApp. This change is helping keep WhatsApp a place for personal and private conversations.” The new feature limits the sharing of “highly forwarded messages” to just one chat.

**Also Read: [WhatsApp tips and tricks: Find out who blocked you on WhatsApp](#)**

The Facebook-owned instant messaging platform has also partnered with the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) to help users double-check any information directly with any of the 12 IFCN’s partner organisations including AFP, Alt News, Boom, Digit Eye, Fact Crescendo, among others. Users can simply get in touch with IFCN’s partner directly if they aren’t sure about the information received on WhatsApp.

The 70 per cent plunge in [highly forwarded messages](#) means the spread of misinformation related to sensitive issues such as [coronavirus pandemic](#) has reduced compared to the last few months. This also means that most messages you receive on WhatsApp are highly likely to be authentic. However, re-checking all forwarded messages with official government announcements is still important.

WhatsApp recently announced that it has taken down over 2 million accounts per month globally several accounts showing suspicious behaviour. It uses artificial intelligence to identify these profiles. Facebook and Twitter have also taken measures to display authentic information at the top of every user profile so they can first get the official announcements and not trust any unverified information available on the platform.

News Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/technology/tech-news-technology/whatsapp-highly-forwarded-messages-reduce-70-percent-6381153/>

## **M6. CERT-In to conduct security audit of COVID-19 data**

*The Hindu-26-Apr-2020*

... under CERT-In (Indian Computer Emergency Response Team) under the Union Ministry of *Electronics and Information Technology* to carry out the audit work. This will ensure security of details collected in Cloud system

In the wake of the controversy surrounding the Sprinklr deal, the State government has decided to carry out a security audit by CERT-In, the nodal agency responsible for dealing with cyber security threats, of the various data collected by the government departments and agencies related to COVID-19.

The Kerala State IT Mission (KSITM) Director has been authorised to entrust the agency empanelled under CERT-In (Indian Computer Emergency Response Team) under the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to carry out the audit work.

The agency will have to execute the security audit of the data stored in the Amazon cloud platform in line with the guidelines of the government. The KSITM Director has been asked to execute a Non-Disclosure Agreement with the agency before commencing the audit, which shall include conditions to ensure security of data shared for audit purpose.

### **This will ensure security of details collected in Cloud system**

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The decision was taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. The Information Technology Department had made a presentation to the Chief Minister, who also handles IT portfolio, on processing and utilisation of data for containment activities of COVID-19.

The government felt it necessary to analyse the data collected using data analytics techniques and tools and to ensure the security of the data collected and captured in the Cloud system, says the order issued by the Electronics and Information Technology Department.

Incidentally, the government order has been issued on April 21 when the Sprinklr row was raging in the State. The LDF government has roped in the U.S.-based company to collate the personal health data collected by field-level workers from nearly 1.75 lakh people categorised as “vulnerable and potentially exposed” to the pandemic.

The Opposition was critical of the government for procuring a healthcare worker mobile application from the firm using disaster management funds to input the details of persons under surveillance without inviting tenders, seeking legal opinion and approval of the Cabinet.

News Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/cert-in-to-conduct-security-audit-of-covid-19-data/article31437888.ece>

**01. [Telangana IT Minister K.T. Rama Rao for exploring new opportunities in post-Covid world](#)**

Express Computer. 29 April 2020

He also sought a help desk at the Ministry of *Electronics and Information Technology (Meity)* for coordinating/liaison with Income Tax (IT) and Goods and ...

**02. [Cyber attack fears high due to work from home: NTRO](#)**

*Economic Times. 29 April 2020*

*These impersonators are seeking donations for Covid-19 and trying to steal credentials for online fraud. Recently, the government had to issue a clarification over cyber criminals sending e-mails and WhatsApp messages stating that the government of India was giving Rs 1,000 to those under the so-called Corona Sahayata Yojana scheme.*

**03. [Google makes Meet video conferencing free to all users, challenging Zoom](#)**

*Economic Times. 29 April 2020*

Alphabet Inc's Google on Wednesday said any user will soon be able to host free video conferences on Meet, turning its previously business-only tool into a bigger rival to Zoom and others battling for users during the coronavirus outbreak.

**04. [Increase in state-sponsored cyber security attacks on government bodies](#)**

*Economic Times. 29 April 2020*

Cybersecurity firm Cyfirma said it had alerted the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (Cert-In), the country's nodal cyber security agency, about conversations linked to a Pakistan state-sponsored group that identifies itself as 'IOK'.

**05. [The government has a new 'email scam warning' for you](#)**

*Economic Times. 29 April 2020*

The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) has issued an advisory warning citizens about a new email extortion campaign.

**06. [Bluetooth-enabled contact tracing apps are at high hacking risk](#)**

*Economic Times. 29 April 2020*

As tech giants like Apple and Google plan COVID-19 contact tracing app using the Bluetooth technology, security researchers have questioned the move, saying tracing apps that allow attackers to access a users Bluetooth also allows them to fully read all Bluetooth communications.

**O7. Centre rejigs 23 top IAS officers, Preeti Sudan gets extension**

*Economic Times. 26 April 2020*

In a major administrative reshuffle, the central government has appointed as many as 23 IAS officers in various government departments

**O8. IAS training in new flavour; online classes, self-reliance part of new module**

*Economic Times. 29 April 2020*

As per the new standard operating procedure at the training academy the new aspects have been added in the IAS training in view of the current Covid-19 pandemic situation in the country

**O9. Government of India now working on Aarogya Setu app for feature phones**

*Financial Express. 28 April 2020*

The Government of India may be looking to start proceedings with “smart” feature phones, like the Reliance JioPhone.