

N1. Functioning of Parliamentary Standing Committees | Om Birla asks Lok Sabha Secretariat to hold review

The Hindu. 21 May 2020

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Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has initiated an exercise to assess the effectiveness of the Parliamentary Standing Committees, from taking stock of the rate of attendance at their meetings to the list of recommendations that have not been accepted by the government.

This comes in the backdrop of efforts by both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha secretariats to hold online meetings of the committees, after pressure from the Opposition parties. The Parliament session abruptly ended on March 23. None of the department related standing committees (DRSCs) have met since then.

The Rajya Sabha secretariat had done a similar analysis. Briefing the House, Chairman Venkaiah Naidu, on March 1, pointed out that a total of [95 MPs did not attend a single meeting of the eight DRSCs](#) that reviewed allocations for 18 Ministries after the presentation of the 2020-21 Union Budget on February 1.

As per sources, Mr. Birla had given over a dozen directives after a conclave held on May 12-14. He asked the secretariat to “follow up intensely” with the members to ensure that they attended meetings of the panels, the sources said.

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The Speaker also asked all the committees to give suggestions to improve the rating/ranking of India in global indices.

Govt orders

In similar orders in March, the government gave blanket instructions to all Ministries to improve Indian's position on various global tally, including the World Press Freedom Index.

The Lok Sabha secretariat, according to the sources, had been asked to prepare a list of cases where a committee's recommendations have not been accepted by the government or where required action is pending for more than three months. Mr. Birla also sought a compilation of major recommendations of the all committees that have had a significant impact on common citizens.

Mr. Birla and Mr. Naidu have met twice on the issue of resuming the meetings of the committees. So far at least three panel chairpersons- Shashi Tharoor, Anand Sharma and B. Mahtab have written to the respective presiding officers to hold meetings online. The secretariats had stalled the suggestion, claiming that the confidentiality clause will be violated if a meeting is held via videoconference. However now both, Mr. Birla and Mr. Naidu have acceded the demand and **the National Informatics Centre** will provide a safe platform for holding meetings.

News Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/functioning-of-parliamentary-standing-committees-om-birla-asks-lok-sabha-secretariat-to-hold-review/article31633562.ece>

N2. Govt to strengthen networking in colleges

Daily Pioneer. 21 May 2020

He said that in all the 105 government degree colleges, 'e- Granthalayas' would be established with the help of National Informatics Centre (NIC).

In view of the crisis precipitated by the novel Coronavirus and the necessity to bring changes in the existing system of imparting education so that the norms of social distancing are followed, the higher education department of Uttarakhand is emphasising on strengthening the networking system in all the Government degree colleges. The intention of the department is to ensure implementation of smooth e-learning system in the colleges.

On Wednesday, the State minister for higher education and cooperatives, Dhan Singh Rawat held a meeting with senior officials of higher education and Information Technology (IT) departments at his Vidhan Sabha office on the subject. He said that in all the 105 government degree colleges, 'e- Granthalayas' would be established with the help of National Informatics Centre (NIC). He said that the higher education department would deposit a sum of Rs 21000 per Degree College to the NIC for a period of five years. The minister also asked the BSNL to conduct survey for strengthening networking in the colleges. Initially 18 colleges located in the district headquarters would be taken up as pilot project by BSNL to provide internet and networking. The minister said that in view of the current scenario all the colleges should have good internet facility, smart classes, e library and system of bio metric system of attendance of students.

The meeting was attended by principal secretary, Anand Vardhan, secretary IT, R K Sudhanshu, director ITDA, Amit Sinha and director higher education Ashok Kumar.

News Source: <https://www.dailypioneer.com/2020/state-editions/govt-to-strengthen-networking-in-colleges.html>

N3. From Aarogya Setu to Ayush Sanjivani, 6 govt apps that will help you to fight against COVID-19

Jagran English. 19 May 2020

Aarogya Setu: This application has been recently created by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) with the guidance of NIC.

New Delhi | Jagran Technology Desk: Amid the times when the coronavirus has forced the government to impose a nation-wide lockdown and restricted everyone inside their homes, there is a need to stay alert, safe and connected digitally, as stated by the government.

"Stay alert, stay safe, and stay connected with digital services! Make the most of these Mobile Apps which make your lives easier at the time of #COVID19 outbreak," stated a recent tweet made by the official account of government's Digital India account.

Meanwhile, when the only option to prevent this deadly pathogen is social distancing, connecting digitally could also prove to be a prevention step. Here is a list of 6 mobile applications that have been created by the government to promote social distancing, especially during the contemporary times of the spread of the contagious virus-- COVID-19.

Aarogya Setu: This application has been recently created by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) with the guidance of NIC. The application works on Bluetooth and GPS based technology and alerts the user of the severity of infection in their location. The application has raised a user base of around 100 million people till now.

BHIM UPI: This mobile application has been in practice since December 2016. The application was developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to promote safe and cashless transactions.

Umang App: Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG) has been created to promote the digital route for citizens to obtain government services such as Aadhar, Digilocker, and **PayGov:** It is an integration of over 600 services in a single application.

Ayush Sanjivani App: The App has been recently created by the MEITY, to fight against the spread of novel coronavirus. The application shares the AYUSH verified home practices to build immunity while educating its users about its impact.

Jan Aushadhi Sugam App: As per the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushidhi services that provide generic medicines at a lower price across India, this application educates its users about the availability of medicine centers near their locality. It also spots the number and location of the working Janaushidhi Kendras across the country.

E-Gram Swaraj App: The application promotes the digitalization of the elementary legislature in India, The Gram Panchayat. E-Gram Swaraj App connects the Urban offices to rural India in order to keep a check over the smooth running of these local bodies.

News Source: <https://english.jagran.com/technology/from-aarogya-setu-to-ayush-sanjivani-6-govt-apps-that-will-help-you-to-fight-against-covid19-10012018>

M1. Lockdown: Nasscom launches free AI, online courseware for upskilling

Livemint . 19 May 2020

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MUMBAI: Nasscom in partnership with Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) on Tuesday launched an on-demand Artificial Intelligence (AI) courseware. This is aimed at enhancing AI readiness among the people in the country, especially in the backdrop of challenges thrown by covid-19 and the lockdown.

The courseware will be available under the Nasscom FutureSkills initiative and will allow individuals to upskill themselves.

Nasscom FutureSkills has curated deep learning programmes for its partner ecosystem which will be available for free.

The Foundational Artificial Intelligence course from SkillUp Online, is aligned to the industry's recommended Foundation AI curriculum--retail price ₹6,800--and is free for everyone. The Foundational Big Data Analytics course from Digital Vidya--priced at ₹5,000--will also be soon made available free of cost. Besides deep skilling, the website will include microlearning content on AI as quick knowledge bytes.

Speaking at the launch of the initiative, Ajay Prakash Sawhney, secretary, MEITY, said, "COVID -19 has thrown unprecedented challenges for the world and industries alike. While we continue to fight these challenges as a nation, it's important to use this opportunity to upgrade our skills, in order to remain industry relevant and future ready."

Going forward, Nasscom plans to provide learning modules on other technologies such as Big Data, IoT, cybersecurity, along with live webinars for participants to create more interactive learning on these themes.

While the industry migrates to adopting processes wherein employees work from home, there is a greater need for them to continue efforts in enhancing skill sets to remain future ready.

Sharing her thoughts on the programme, Debjani Ghosh, president, Nasscom, said, "Through NASSCOM and MeitY's 'Unlock your skills during the lockdown' campaign, we would encourage all stakeholders to use this opportunity of working from home to upskill themselves in the skills of the future. We are confident that together we will be able to overcome this phase and emerge stronger post the crisis."

News Source: <https://www.livemint.com/industry/infotech/lockdown-nasscom-launches-free-ai-online-courseware-for-upskilling-11589873538157.html>

M2. Delhi HC issues notices to govt, Facebook, Google, Twitter on 'Bois Locker Room' case

Economic Times. 20 May 2020

*The notice on Tuesday was sent to Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of **Electronics and Information Technology** and Ministry of Finance.*

The court had on Monday directed the police to speed up its investigation of Bois Locker Room case. Former RSS ideologue KN Govindacharya had filed an interim petition in the Delhi High Court, seeking liability of social media platforms like Instagram over the content posted on their platform in the 'Bois Locker Room' case.

Bengaluru: The Delhi High Court on Tuesday issued notices to the Central Government, Facebook, Google and Twitter over an application seeking removal of groups like 'Bois locker room' to protect the safety and security of children.

The court had on Monday directed the city police to speed up its investigation of Bois Locker Room - a social media group on Instagram on which obscene messages and morphed pictures of underage girls were allegedly shared.

Former RSS ideologue KN Govindacharya had filed an interim petition in the Delhi High Court, seeking liability of social media platforms like Instagram over the content posted on their platform in the 'Bois Locker Room' case.

The 'Bois Locker Room' was an Instagram chat group of 17-18-year-old boys from affluent Delhi families who were discussing raping their classmates.

The notice on Tuesday was sent to Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and Ministry of Finance.

"The application is seeking urgent directions with respect to safeguard youngster and school students from the menace of fake and illegal accounts and groups on social media, which are impermissible in law and also against various orders of this Hon'ble Court," said K. N. Govindacharya last week.

He said the unwanted episodes like 'Bois Locker Room' reflects the failure of social media companies in performing their obligations.

The matter was heard by Bench of Justice RS Endlaw and Justice Sangita Dhingra Sehgal.

News Source: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/delhi-hc-issues-notices-to-govt-facebook-google-twitter-on-bois-locker-room-case/articleshow/75827298.cms>

M3. ZEE5 India's CEO Tarun Katial to head IAMAI's digital entertainment committee

Financial Express -20-May-2020

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The Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) – Digital Entertainment Committee has appointed Tarun Katial, CEO, ZEE5 India as the chairman of the association. Katial takes over the role from Ajit Mohan, managing director, Facebook India. Moreover, Gourav Rakshit, COO, Viacom 18 Digital Ventures has been named the new vice chairman succeeding Uday Sodhi, Senior Partner, Kurate Digital Consulting.

The digital entertainment sector, similar to the rest of the economy, is going through challenging times due to COVID-19, Tarun Katial, CEO, ZEE5 India. “At IAMAI, our immediate task at hand would be to seek support from the Government, policymakers, local authorities to resume production activities at the earliest. This would go a long way in supporting various supply chain linkages, citizen’s livelihood and contribution to the national exchequer.”

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Over the last few days owing to the lockdown situation, IAMAI has been in communication with MEITY, MIB and MHA as the liaison between the industry and Government officials. The association has earlier communicated to the officials about the collective efforts taken by the sector to assuage the impact of lockdown, and suggested an industry SoP for the sector to resume operations post lockdown.

Established in 2004, The Internet and Mobile Association of India [IAMAI] represents the entire gamut of digital businesses in India. The association is registered under the Societies Act and is a recognized charity in Maharashtra. With a membership of nearly 300 Indian and overseas companies, and with offices in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kolkata, the association works towards charting a growth path for the digital industry in India.

The Digital Entertainment Committee at IAMAI represents members of the video on demand and audio on demand companies such as Netflix, Zee5, Prime Video, Hotstar, Sony Liv, Viacom18, RJio Studios, MX Player, Hungama, Discovery, Hoichoi, Arre, Hooq, Gaana, Saavn, Flickstree among others.

News Source: <https://www.financialexpress.com/brandwagon/zee5-indias-ceo-tarun-katial-to-head-iama-is-digital-entertainment-committee/1964979/>

[01. Kerala records highest number of cyber crimes in lockdown time: K7 Computing's Cyber Threat Report](#)

Hindu BusinessLine. 21 May 2020

The Covid-19-induced lockdown has led to a spurt in cyber crimes, with Kerala recording the highest number of attacks, according to K7 Computing's Cyber Threat Report.

[02. CBI redflags Covid-related malicious software](#)

Hindu BusinessLine. 19 May 2020

The Central Bureau of Investigation has redflagged a malicious software threat that uses an update related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

“Based on inputs received from INTERPOL, CBI has issued an alert relating to a banking Trojan known as Cerberus.

[03. How lockdown reveals actual state of e-education in India](#)

Economic Times. 20 May 2020

The demand for e-education isn't confined to only Covid-19 pandemic, our education planner needs to adopt more technological advancement in the curriculum

[04. Cyber fraudsters on the prowl to steal your money, never click unknown links, warn cyberpolice](#)

Economic Times. 21 May 2020

The links are programmed to steal the information pertaining to the receivers credit/debit cards and bank details

[05. AP government launches AndhraGreens website to facilitate e-commerce of fruits and vegetables](#)

Economic Times. 21 May 2020

The portal connects farmers and food processing units with end consumers directly for purchasing fresh and quality fruits, vegetables, spices and other horticultural products.

[06. Cyberbullying to digital rights and responsibilities: CBSE releases cyber safety guide for students](#)

Economic Times. 21 May 2020

The manual has been prepared at a time when students have increased access to the digital world with classroom teaching suspended due to the COVID-19-induced lockdown, and teaching and learning activities being conducted online.