



Listening in

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Highlights

- Communication hubs to monitor the digital chatter of citizens. To be implemented by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, this initiative came to light when the Broadcast Engineering Consultants India called for bids to provide software and service support for the hubs.
- The bidder, once successful, would be required to monitor local editions of newspapers, cable channels, FM radio stations, and influential social media handles. This proposal raises serious questions about the surveillance state, right to privacy and data protection.
- In the Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (Retd.) v. Union of India judgment (2017), the Supreme Court of India held informational privacy to be “a facet of the right to privacy.” Justice S.K. Kaul, described privacy as “an inherent right” and upheld the “individual’s right to control dissemination of his personal information.”
- While the European Union is moving towards a more secure data regime under the General Data Protection Regulation, private data and personal information in India are still exposed to serious risks from state and non-state actors.
- The government should, therefore, focus on enacting tough data protection laws which ensure a balance between individual rights and legitimate concerns of the state like national security or investigation of crime

Source: The Hindu

