IIGF 2021- Event Summary Report
PART-1

The **Internet Governance Forum (IGF)** is a multistakeholder platform bringing together representatives from various groups, considering all to be at par to discuss public policy issues related to the Internet.

India, with more than **1.4 billion citizens**, **1.2 billion mobile users**, and **800 million Internet users**, demonstrates the growing Internet culture in the country. E-Governance and National Security becomes of paramount importance in India, especially with enhanced cyber space.

With a forementioned internet economy size and users, as well as diverse stakeholders' views, **Indian Government, along with the National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) and other Stakeholders** hosted its own **India Internet Governance Forum (IIGF) 2021** held from **25th November – 27th November 2021** highlighting the theme **"Empower India through the Power of Internet"**.

This event is referred to as the multistakeholder model of Internet Governance, which has been one of the key reasons for the Internet's success.

Key Highlights of the Event:

India IGF (IIGF) provided the platform to facilitate discussions between intergovernmental organisations, private companies, technical community, academic community and civil society organisations who are involved in Internet governance-related public policy issues. This policy dialogue is carried out on a co-equal basis through open and inclusive processes.

We have received 39 Workshop Proposal out of which **14 proposals** were selected by the group of multistakeholders for the **IIGF 2021 event (25th November – 27th November 2021**) and the remaining **25 proposals** will be used for the **Post IIGF event** to be held from **21st – 23rd December 2021**.

In addition to these 11 Pre IIGF events were also being organized online under fourteen thematic areas.

S.No	Events	Key highlights
1	Total no of sessions	19 Plenary Session – 3 Workshop Session – 14 Valedictory Session – 1 Inaugural session – 1
2	Total Speakers	114 (Including chair and speakers)
3	Total Papers Submitted	40
4	Total participants registered	108456

5	Traffic on website	167K
6	Languages on website	14 (Including English and 2 foreign language)
7	Followers/ Visitors on social media	Facebook - 15,078 Twitter- 4,675 LinkedIn- 24 Instagram- 24 Koo- 56
8	Total Platform Session Views across 3 days	4157
9	Total YouTube Views across 3 days	900

IIGF 2021 was honoured and blessed with the best wishes message from Hon'ble Prime Minister which was read out by Chair India IGF 2021 in the valedictory session. Further, IIGF 2021 hosted internet stalwarts like Mr. Maarten Botterman - Chair of ICANN **Board, Ms. Anriette Esterhuysen – Chair of MAG IGF** along with Global Indian technology CEOs.

Key Takeaways from IIGF 2021

I. **Key points made by Shri Ashwani Vaishnaw, Hon'ble Minister for Communications & IT and Railways**:
    a. IIGF is an important forum and will define the norms of governance for the most important part of our economy and our society today.
    b. We need a fundamental rethink of the entire internet governance structure.
    c. With the largest number of internet users, India has to become a key stakeholder in how internet governance is defined all over the world.
    d. For achieving that, there is a need to resolve five key issues -
        i.   inclusive growth for an equitable society;
        ii.   responsibility for content regulation;
        iii. mitigating global climate change impact through technology;
        iv.   social impact of disruption in business models like e-Commerce; and
        v.   most importantly cybersecurity.

II. **Key points made by Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Hon'ble Minister of State for Electronics & IT:**
    a. The Minister repeatedly stressed on the vital aspect of multi-stakeholderism –
        i.   Carefully shape the Internet for the future through policies, regulations, standards, rights, and responsibilities to ensure the multi-stakeholder nature of decision making of the Internet is retained.
        ii.   Multi-stakeholder Internet Governance discussions should be institutionalized and IIGF can play a key role in that.
        iii. There is a need to strengthen the multi-stakeholder model by promoting open, free, safe, trusted and accountable internet.
    b. Hope robust deliberations from IIGF lead to sustainable thoughts and ideas as an outcome, to shape the future of the internet.
    c. Future of the global internet should be and must be led by India's internet ecosystem and innovation capabilities.
    d. The current legislation to regulate the Internet is dated and needs modernising.
    e. Develop strategic capabilities among open societies and democratic like-minded countries to guide the shaping of the future of the Internet.
    f. Eliminate access barriers for inclusive and meaningful engagements.
    g. Report on "Building an Inclusive Digital Society for Rural India" talks about opening a basket of technological solutions to deliver connectivity.
    h. Inclusion is not just about connectivity but also adoption – device cost, ecosystem, languages, accessibility of content for persons with disabilities, etc.
    i. The internet can be, must be and should be the bridge that brings the citizens outside the system, into the system, towards a collective quest for prosperity.
    j. Hope to continue this engagement through IIGF in different forms on an ongoing basis – this is the beginning for a collective path to build the internet of the future that all of us deserve.

III. **Key Points made by Mr. Maarten Botterman, ICANN Board Chairman:**
    a. India's efforts to bring equitable Internet to all to serve the people, to the local community levels and enabling multilingual internet are praiseworthy.
    b. The Internet serves 6 billion people globally and should continue to work in an un-fragmented way with people being comfortable in using it.

c. Successfully integrated lines in the scripts in the internet root sum will allow all languages in India to be represented in the core of the internet.

IV. **Key Points made by Ms. Anriette Esterhyusen, Chair, MAG, IGF:**
  a. Leverage the potential of utility networks to build capacity not just at the level of access to network infrastructure but also at the level of access to content, and participate in decision making with local, national and state level government.
  b. Approach trust and safety not from the point of control, but focus on capacity building at institutional and government levels.
  c. Do more to prioritize digital equality in terms of access to devices, infrastructure and skills to maintain competitiveness at both levels of cutting-edge innovation and at the level of bridging the digital inequality.

V. **Key Points made by Shri Ajay Prakash Sawhney, Secretary, MeitY:**
  a. Measures are being introduced to facilitate content in Indian languages, including various tools like internationalized domain names in Indian scripts.
  b. India now being an important part of the global internet ecosystem, it is befitting that this chapter of India Internet Governance is up and operational.
  c. Meaningful, consolidated and equitable internet connectivity for maximum number of people to provide immense opportunity to improve their livelihoods, get access to the global market and contribute back to society.
  d. Strengthen multistakeholderism and equitable access to increase and maximize community participation irrespective of status, and India's position at the Global IG fora.

Points made by other Esteemed Speakers:

VI. **Climate change** should be part of IG discussion.

VII. For an inclusive India online, **need to use the Universal Service Obligation Fund.**

VIII. Enhance **involvement of Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) in policymaking and capacity** building among students; proper implementation of policies. There is need to embed, educate and equip people.

IX. **Accessibility should be pre-bred** into products and services as retro-fitting solutions is not a sustainable approach.

X. **Addressing gender equality and encouraging women entrepreneurs** will lead to enhanced Digital Inclusion.

XI. GoI is committed to **creating world-class ICT Laws** and also becoming a **global leader in the Internet Standardization and Policy space.**

XII. We need many more **India-specific standards** like 5Gi, to build India-specific utilities.

XIII. We need a **Universal Declaration of Digital Rights** today for data protection & data sovereignty, similar to Human Rights and India should lead this initiative.

XIV. The government needs to create opportunities for Innovations in the health sector and focus on consumer-based products.

XV. Data presented on **significant progress of digital payments** across different areas of India, traversing topographic, demographic, size and socio-economic hurdles.

XVI. **Focus on Skilling** and being **fast on the block of Web 3.0**.

XVII. **Connectivity of internet and usage of digital apps are pillars of digital economy** of India Digital inclusion is a driver for social economic progress.

XVIII. Insightful infographics presented on remarkable **scaling up of Public Digital platforms**, **evaluation metrics for Apps**, and **Financial Inclusion** outlook.

XIX. **Indoor connectivity** is crucial in the WFA era, besides for critical services.

XX. **Improve the quality of experience** while using digital apps, specifically digital payment apps and Government initiatives.

XXI. **PM WANI to drive QoE via shared Wi-Fi and improved broadband speeds** – can enable ideal mechanism for UPI-like platform play for rural India.

XXII. **Promote Public Private Partnerships.**

XXIII. **Successful startups need a proper business enabling environment and hand-holding from Government**

XXIV. There is an **urgent need for an independent regulatory body for data protection**.

XXV. **Multilingual Internet** is a Socio-economic tool to empower India. The industry has to adopt, embrace and imbibe Multilingual internet.

XXVI. **Government websites should be available in local languages.**

XXVII. Government may ensure compliance on the multilingual /language products by certifications (by STQC like organizations).

XXVIII. To achieve the **ultimate objective of increasing MSME to 60%, more regulations** to suit the needs of consumers and manufacturers need to be introduced.

XXIX. There are huge opportunities in exports for micro-sellers by digitalizing the inventories. The craft sector has a huge potential as it is the 2nd largest sector after agriculture.

XXX. **Connecting India with digital infrastructure can take education to the last mile.**

XXXI. Just connectivity is not enough, **we need quality bandwidth and content**.

XXXII. **Voice based multilingual Internet is crucial for users** to use Internet services in local/preferred languages.

XXXIII. Barriers to **distance learning and blended learning** such as cost, visual and learning difficulties, digital illiteracy and skills, gender discrimination and cultural barriers need to be addressed.

XXXIV. Infra should be strong, **digital libraries should be accessible, and training and capacity building should be a priority** for persons with disabilities (PwDs).

XXXV. **Hybrid learning should be made mandatory** in education system to help PwDs.

XXXVI. **Standardisation of policies and technologies** for accessibility is essential.

XXXVII. Voluntary licensing should be norm and there should be profit/risks/rewards for everyone connected to the value chain in order to foster growth.

XXXVIII. There should be civil and criminal liabilities attached to piracy and conscious infringement should not be allowed.

XXXIX. Implementation of laws should be preceded by responsible experimentation with soft laws and surrounding mechanisms.

XL. **Open tech platforms, blockchain, KYBC norms, access control and digital management systems** should be introduced for protection as well as growth.

XLI. Most of the rural areas in India have affordable connectivity but lack quality in content delivery which should be addressed.

XLII. To have meaningful connectivity, the amount of DNS getting resolved outside should be minimised by creating DNS resolvers in India.

XLIII. **Need to create more regional internet exchange points at the state-level** and set up mechanisms to check the efficiency of existing internet exchange points.

XLIV. **Complete IPv6 backhaul** required for providing high speed internet to the users.

XLV. Address low availability of policies regarding operation and maintenance of the internet middle-mile infrastructure.

XLVI. ISPs should upgrade to latest technology and alternatives like FSOC.

XLVII. India should **build the capacity to design, develop and create its own root server** and bring the content close to the users by using edge computing technology.

XLVIII.	Create awareness about possible legal solutions about empowering youth with **knowledge about threats and vulnerabilities on the internet** domain; remedies provided by laws; and how to avail them.
XLIX.	Youth should be made aware to distinguish between activities that are permissible by law and ones that are not.
L.	Greater accountability is required from the platforms, states and private players.
LI.	There should be better systems for data acquisition by LEAs.
LII.	India needs to **participate in all international digital panels**, platforms viz. IETF, ICANN, etc.; understand the system and implement the policies to suit our needs.
LIII.	Focus on elevating our standards to the required level and entities that are into capacity building should work on higher volume.
LIV.	Strengthen the system by providing a **permanent institutional mechanism which helps in capacity building and mentoring** with an array of experts.
LV.	Formulate a public policy and increase **participation of Indian companies more on standards** which leads to products.
LVI.	Consultation is an absolute prerequisite for policy formulation.
LVII.	Ambiguity in laws and policies should be minimized through clarifications by Govt.
LVIII.	**Citizen interests** should be the most important aspect of digital governance.
LIX.	**Cheaper smartphones/devices** to help take internet to everyone in the country.
LX.	Remove roadblocks in terms of policy, regulations, spectrum and its utilization in order to improve productivity.
LXI.	Focus areas for embedding cybersecurity into India's economic foreign and military architecture and policies - Defend attacks/disruptions/interference with sensitive national infrastructure; safeguard cultural fabric of society & protect human rights; incentivize industry for good cyber practices & information sharing; and understand risks to improve services & enforce standards/controls to limit undesired consequences.
LXII.	Rather than an expense, cybersecurity must be treated as part of business operations or business continuity.
LXIII.	India should lead in coming up with such policies so that jurisdiction-based data can be referred to by LEAs when required.
LXIV.	Lack of awareness about UA, IDN and EAI among stakeholders needs to be addressed.
LXV.	Developers and owners should invest in making their software's **UA compliant**.
LXVI.	UA adoption essential for multilingual internet for tapping rural Indian market.
LXVII.	**Audit Govt. apps, websites and initiatives** for the promotion and account of UA.
LXVIII.	With emerging technologies like AI, Cloud, IoT, Analytics, etc. giving rise to a Data Economy, **security and privacy of personal data** is critical.
LXIX.	India needs to tackle cybersecurity issues by modifying existing legislations and introducing new legislations.
LXX.	Cybersecurity controls should be technology neutral and Companies have to evolve ethical standards.
LXXI.	**India needs a regulator urgently in cyberspace**, and offenders must be meted out graded and proportionate punishment.
LXXII.	Strengthen user awareness and social consciousness on the use of the Internet.
LXXIII.	Create cyber awareness from the grassroots level, especially in schools and society.
LXXIV.	Efficient **moderation and governance of fake news** is required.
LXXV.	Implement regulated facial recognition features for empowerment and protection of the rights of the differently-abled/disabled.
LXXVI.	Framework needed for the **moderation of content** with harmony among multiple Stakeholders.