Big Data and Information Privacy – A future challenge

Description

Big Data is a technology that has come into existence in recent years. Its applications, ease of access and accuracy have made it very popular in diverse fields. But, very recently, its cons have also come to the fore. The Cambridge Analytica and Facebook scandal exposed the weak flank of system, i.e, the ease with which the information can be misused.

Information Privacy in Big Data is something to be taken very seriously, as it can influence even voter behavior and in extension alter our Governments. Politics is emerging as one of the key markets of Data Analytics firms. Cambridge Analytica was increasingly engaged in helping politicians to understand voter behavior through data(later found to be stolen), Donald Trump was allegedly one of its clients.

Indian politicians have also been catching up. Several political parties have opted for the services of Data Analytics firms to understand voter behavior for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. In the Indian context, information privacy has been a bone of contention between the present government and the opposition over the Aadhaar Bill. Aadhaar database has been repeatedly proven to be prone and vulnerable to attacks. A single breach in its security could expose vital information of Indian citizens.

In the light of this privacy loophole, for the Big Data Technology to stay relevant and benevolent, certain checks and balances need to exist. Stringent privacy norms and punitive laws need to be put in place so that companies would be more careful with user data. Data must only be used with consumer/user consent. Also, the consumers/users must be made aware mandatorily of the exact details of the information that would be extracted from their profiles, to what extent will it be used, etc.

Your Turn…

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