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DIGITAL INDIA BILL

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details the Digital India Bill which is in the process stage. The government is working on the bill and intends to present it in the forthcoming parliamentary session.

For Prelims:

a) Features of Digital India Bill.

For Mains: GS2, International Relations, and GS3, Maritime Security

a) Significance of Legal Framework.

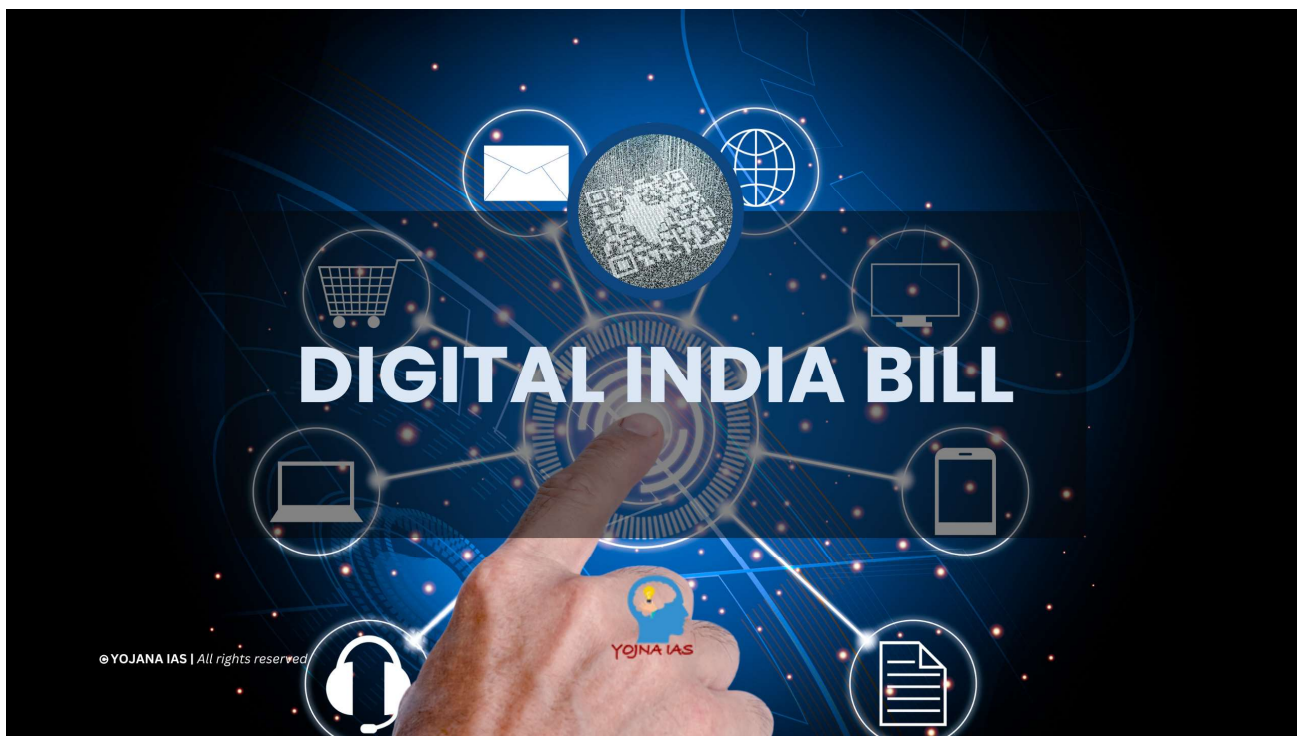
b) Issues in this bill

c) Comparative study of the Digital India Bill and Data Protection Act.

Background: The Information Technology Act is the primary law in India that regulates entities on the internet, including social media platforms and e-commerce companies. However, it does not currently consider online misinformation to be illegal. Moreover, the offenses under the IT Act are largely adapted from the offline world, such as publishing private pictures of people without consent, sharing pornographic content, and disseminating child sexual abuse material.

WHAT IS DIGITAL INDIA BILL?

The Digital India Bill is a proposed bill that aims to replace the Information Technology Act, of 2000. It aims to create a new legal framework for regulating entities on the internet in India. The bill is expected to cover a wide range of issues related to electronic transactions, cybersecurity, data protection, privacy, and digital governance.



Digital India Bill

NEED OF DIGITAL INDIA BILL

With over 760 million internet users in India and the number expected to rise, laws are needed to establish new frameworks for citizens' rights, responsibilities, and data collection obligations. The Digital India Bill aims to replace the IT Act, of 2000, and provide a legal framework for regulating entities on the internet while promoting digital literacy and safeguarding citizens' privacy.

OBJECTIVES OF THE DIGITAL INDIA BILL

The bill is expected to provide:

- **Legal Framework:** A legal framework for e-commerce, digital signatures, electronic records, and other electronic transactions.
- **Cybercrime:** To address cybersecurity and provide measures to prevent and prosecute cybercrimes.
- **Data protection and Privacy regime:** To safeguards the privacy of Indian citizens' personal information.
- **Digital Governance Framework:** To provide a framework for digital governance that will enable the delivery of government services through digital means.
- **Society empowerment:** To provide a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy in India.



The goal of the new Digital India Act, according to the Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, is to "act as catalysts for Indian economy by enabling more innovation, more startups, and at the same time protecting the citizens of India in terms of safety, trust, and accountability."

-Rajeev Chandrasekhar, MoS for Electronics and Information Technology



The goal of the Digital India Bill

FEATURES

- **Regulatory body:** The bill aims to create a regulator for the internet that will oversee social media platforms, e-commerce websites, etc.
- **Balance rights of an individual and information for public use:** There is a need to balance the personal information of a person and the use of the information for other purposes like legal use, public use, etc.
- **Regulation of new technologies:** The bill in its updated version will include issues related to blockchain technology, artificial intelligence, big data, etc.
- **Address emerging security issues:** The bill aims to have provisions related to cybercrimes and e-commerce.

Issues with the regulation of the Internet: The regulation of the internet is a complex issue that poses several challenges, some of which include:

- **Balancing freedom of expression with regulation:** The internet provides a platform for free expression, but regulating content without infringing on free speech needs a delicate balance.
- **Jurisdictional challenges:** The internet is global, and it is challenging to regulate content that crosses international borders. This issue can create conflicts between different countries' laws and regulations.
- **Emerging technologies:** The pace of technological change makes it difficult to regulate emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, blockchain, and the Internet of Things (IoT).
- **Privacy and data protection:** The internet enables the collection and processing of vast amounts of personal data, raising concerns about privacy and data protection.
- **Cybersecurity:** The internet is vulnerable to cyber-attacks, and regulating cybersecurity is challenging, as it requires collaboration between multiple stakeholders.

Way Forward

The introduction of the Digital India Bill must be welcomed as it aims to keep pace with time by adding new issues facing the internet. It also aims to strengthen the digital ecosystem and strengthen cyber security space. There is a need for consultation with all stakeholders to incorporate their viewpoints and present a lacunae-free law. The principles of openness, privacy, trust, and accountability must be put into force while making the law.

Sources:
The Hindu

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