



Statement from the Asia Internet Coalition (AIC) on India's Draft E-Commerce Policy

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(Please attribute quote to Jeff Paine, Managing Director, Asia Internet Coalition)

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The Asia Internet Coalition ("AIC") commends the government for drafting this ecommerce policy. Though well-intended, it is highly problematic for attempting to **artificially ringfence India from the global digital economy**, while seriously underestimating India's ability to compete internationally.

Broadly, we urge the government to **align itself with existing legal precedents** related to the nature and ownership of data, market competition, consumer protection, cross-border data transfer, privacy and e-commerce, areas which the draft diverts from.

Most troubling is the overarching approach to data management, which **misclassifies data as a national asset, thus depriving individuals of autonomy** over and consent for their personal data, a protected right in India.

Cross-border data flow is essential to the digital economy, and mandating data localisation will only limit access to technology and create barriers for Indian SMEs to grow globally. We urge the government to adopt an evidence-based approach, given that **India has been the biggest beneficiary of free data flow as a global IT outsourcing leader, with annual exports exceeding USD 135 billion**.

In view of the economy-wide impact of this policy, we ask the government to undertake further consultations with industry stakeholders, as we are committed to working together to secure the future of India's digital economy.

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(AIC's full submission to DPIIT can be found [here](#))

About the Asia Internet Coalition

The Asia Internet Coalition (AIC) is an industry association comprising leading internet and technology companies. The AIC seeks to promote the understanding and resolution of Internet policy issues in the Asia Pacific region. For more information, visit www.aicasia.org