

13 FEBRUARY 2019

1. Minister promises to get TikTok banned

TikTok, a popular mobile phone application that allows users to shoot and share 15-second videos with lip-sync set to popular film songs and dialogues among others, is being seen as a “cultural” and “law and order.”

The fact that a large number of youngsters are hooked to the app.

Impact of social media on Society

Social Media can be defined as any web or mobile based platform that enables an individual or agency to communicate interactively and enables exchange of user generated content and it is explained by a number of tools, which includes blogs, Wikis, discussion forums, micro-blogs, twitter and social networking sites.

Social Media in recent times has become synonymous with Social Networking sites such as Facebook or Micro Blogging sites such as Twitter.

The advantages of Social media are so many but they are posing threat to Internal Security in various forms like Cyber Terrorism, Fraud, crime, spreading violence, etc.

- According to the Cisco 2018 Annual Security Report, the highest concentration of online security threats are on mass audience sites, including social media.
- The rapid spread of false information through social media is among the emerging risks identified by the World Economic Forum in its Global Risks 2018 Report.

National Security is of prime importance for any nation to maintain peace and harmony. Nations face numerous internal security challenges and Social Media act as the platform for that. Social media is not security threat in itself but the users of these services can pose the threats by their anti-social endeavours.

With limited government oversight, industry standards or incentives to educate users on security, privacy and identity protection, users are exposed to identity theft and fraud. Additionally, these platforms have huge confidential user information, and are likely vulnerable to outside or inside attack which is detrimental to Internal Security.

Different Internal Security threats due to Social Media are:

1) Cyber Terrorism:

The biggest challenge for internal security of nation through social networking site is cyber terrorism.

Today terrorists select Social Media as a practical alternative to disturb the function of nations and other business activities because this technique has potential to cause huge damage. It poses enormous threat in international system and attracts the mass media, the security community, and the information technology corporation.

At the same time, due to the convenience, affordability and broad reach of social media platforms like YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, terrorist groups have increasingly used social media to further their goals and spread their message.

Social Media became a platform for coordination of plans of attack, communication with cells, or propaganda and information and spread of hate campaign or messages that can hurt the sentiments of people.

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These groups now have their own websites where they can convey their propaganda and, for most of them, they advise their readers and followers not to trust the media which are seen as the enemy.

The chat service like Skype, which includes voice and video capabilities, has become particularly popular with terrorist cells. Chat rooms and electronic forums enable the insurgent and extremists groups to communicate with members and supporters all over the world, to recruit new followers and to share information at little risk of identification by authorities.

Youths are especially targeted for propaganda, incitement and recruitment purposes by terrorist groups.

2) Fraud:

Social networking sites also invite fraudsters to take excellent opportunity to become wealthy by applying deceiver schemes.

3) Criminal Activity and Money laundering:

Internet Media is a major resource for developing serious crime. As Internet is growing explosively, online criminals try to present fraudulent plans in many ways. Social networking sites also pose major challenge in financial and organized crime which destabilizes the system. It creates threat to a company's security because of what employees might disclose and they are on prime target for cyber criminals.

4) International users:

The other national and international users such as the political parties, NGO's, hackers pose a serious threat using the social media. For example, during the civil turmoil in the Arab Spring Uprising, the various governments were threatened through the social media.

5) To Bring Revolution:

Some countries in the world feel threatened by the fact that social media can bring the people together and thus, create a revolution. This in turn can cause political instability

6) Communal Violence and Fanning Tensions:

Importantly, social media also seems to be playing a significant role in polarising different communities in India and compounding India's Security challenges. The viral videos and false updates of communal clashes, riots and terrorists attack have created a massive impact in the life of public.

The power of media and the process of public opinion formation in a free society had undergone radical change due to Internet and faster means of communications like SMS, whats app, viber and simplified mobile internet. The chain of events beginning with the clashes in our North-east and which caused very serious and mass exodus of North-east population from several Indian cities has revealed the fragility of our national Cohesion.

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7) Virtual Community:

Popular social networking websites are another means of attracting potential members and followers. These types of virtual communities are growing increasingly popular all over the world, especially among younger demographics. This can build Anti-national Sentiments among Society.

8) Hacking:

Hackers write or use ready-made computer programs to attack the target computer. By using Social Media hackers breach the national security and steal important data of defence or other strategic sectors. This can kneel the whole country without using Arms and Ammunition.

Although social media has the potential to be a threat to national security, it also has the opportunity to strengthen National Security and to be used to benefit the Government.

One of the fastest growing ways that Governments are using social media is as a warning or trend prevention tool. As a monitoring tool, the government is able to recognize the first signs of any hostile or potentially dangerous activity by collecting and analyzing messages in order to try to predict events that could be a danger to National Security.

Another important use of social media by the government is as an institutional Communication Tool. Social Media provides a medium that creates cohesion between federal agencies by increasing both communication and transparency.

Challenges in Monitoring Social Media

- 1) Server Location and Laws of Different Countries:** Lack of Geographical Boundaries makes social media regulation an arduous task. Major Complicating Factors to secure the networks and Media Much of the hardware and software that make up the communications ecosystem is sourced externally.
- 2) Encrypted Message:** Use of phones/whatsapp to send and receive messages, concerns the government because the communications sent via such devices and applications are encrypted and could not be monitored and consequently hinders the country's efforts to fight terrorism and crime.
- 3) Complicated Networks:** The task of securing the networks is also complicated by the fact that much of the infrastructure is in the hands of private companies who see measures such as security auditing and other regulations and frameworks as adding to their costs. Source of Origin is difficult to find out.

Way Forward

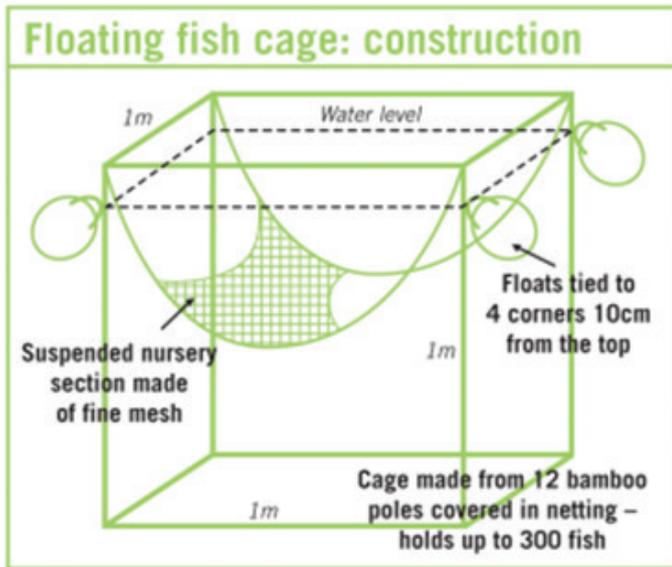
In a globalised society media becomes a lethal weapon against the enemy, and the populace as well. Information, as an element of soft power, is a strategic instrument within the context of grand strategy. There should be judicious use of social media. But we will have to mull steps to check its misuse for creating Internal security threat to Nation. Social Media, with all its benefits and the potential for more, is definitely a boon to our world, however misuse or irresponsible usage can have negative affectson an Internal security. We need to guard against the negative impact of the social media, which ought to be used in the correct manner for creative or productive purposes so that it is progressive to mankind and society at large, rather than regressive.

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2. Offer to cultivate finfish

The Mandapam Centre for Sustainable Aquaculture (MCeSA), a constituent unit of Tamil Nadu Dr J Jayalalithaa Fisheries University has offered an ‘open sea cage culture finfish farming’ to fisher farmers with 100% subsidised physical structure – the cage and fishing net.



It proposed to cover 100 farmers in the first phase during this year distributing to each beneficiary a circular high density polyethylene (HDP) non-corrosive cage and fishing net worth Rs. 2.5 lakh under the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) funded project.

Fisher farmers who were interested in harvesting the high value finfish species of Cobia and Silver pompano could approach in Mandapam and avail cages and fishing nets. They have to bear operational cost.

Later, it proposed to extend the programme to cover 400 fisher farmers throughout the State.

The operation cost for each beneficiary would come to about Rs. two lakh including juvenile fishes, feed and maintenance.

The beneficiaries could purchase the juvenile fishes of the two species either from the MCeSA or from the Mandapam regional centre of Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI).

In a season, a farmer could grow 3,000 to 4,000 juvenile fishes in a cage and harvest about 1.8 tonnes after six to seven months. In view of the fluctuating market conditions, the beneficiaries could achieve marginal profit in the beginning and make the cage culture lucrative when the species fetched good prices in the market.

In a year, the beneficiaries could harvest twice after shifting the cages from Gulf of Mannar to Palk Bay depending upon the condition of the sea.

The MCeSA would offer technical assistance and guidance to the farmers. Supported by CMFRI, fishermen were engaged in open sea cage culture in Olaikuda, Pamban, Mandapam and Maraikayarpattinam.

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Prelims Prespect:

- About cage culture finfish farming, its types and benefits
- Gulf of Mannar, Palk Bay
- National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB)
- High density polyethylene (HDP) non-corrosive cage

3. 95% of registered realty firms have no PAN

In an audit of assessments made by the Income Tax Department on the real estate sector, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) found that a whopping 95% of the companies registered with the Registrar of Companies (RoC) did not have a permanent account number (PAN).

In an analysis of the data of the RoCs in 12 States, the CAG also noted that there were several companies that the tax net had failed to capture and that the department had no mechanism to ensure that all the registered companies had PAN or that they filed their income tax returns (ITR) regularly.

RoCs did not have information about PAN in respect of 51,670 (95%) of a total of 54,578 companies for which data was made available to audit. It was difficult for Audit to ascertain from the information obtained from RoCs whether these companies were in the tax net of the ITD or not.

The CAG said that it forwarded the information received from the RoCs regarding the companies without PAN to the Income Tax Department, but received no reply. Audit attempted to ascertain whether the companies in RoC data with PAN were regular in filing their ITRs.

In respect of 840 companies with PAN coming under selected assessment charges, we noticed that 159 companies [19%] were not filing their ITRs.

From the above, it can be concluded that there is no mechanism with the Income Tax Department to ensure that all the registered companies have PAN and are filing their ITRs regularly. In order to rectify this, the CAG recommended that the Central Board of Direct Taxes and the Ministry of Corporate Affairs set up an inter-ministerial arrangement so that when a company is registered with the RoC, the application for a PAN is automatically submitted to the tax department.

Automatic updation

When PAN is issued to the newly incorporated company, it will automatically be sent to RoC Systems for updation.

Further, the companies should be compulsorily required to submit a copy of acknowledgement of ITR while furnishing their annual reports in Form MGT-7. This will ensure that companies file their ITRs and at the same time the data of ROC will be in sync with that of ITD.

Note: Refer, only 50% of PAN linked to Aadhaar (08.02.2019) news.

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4. India, China lead global greening effort: study

India and China are leading the global greening effort, a finding that is quite contrary to the general perception worldwide, a study based on NASA satellite data, observing that the world is a greener place than it was 20 years ago.



China and India account for one-third of the greening but contain only 9% of the planet's land area covered in vegetation. That is a surprising finding, considering the general notion of land degradation in populous countries from over exploitation.

The study published on February 11, in the journal Nature Sustainability said that satellite data (2000 – 2017) revealed a greening pattern strikingly prominent in China and India and overlapping with croplands worldwide.

China alone accounts for 25% of the global net increase in leaf area with only 6.6% of global vegetated area.

The greening in China is from forests (42%) and croplands (32%), but in India it is mostly from croplands (82%) with minor contribution from forests (4.4%).

China is engineering ambitious programmes to conserve and expand forests with the goal of mitigating land degradation, air pollution and climate change. Food production in China and India has increased by over 35% since 2000 mostly owing to an increase in harvested area through multiple cropping facilitated by fertilizer use and surface or groundwater irrigation.

Many factors

When the greening of the earth was first observed, we thought it was due to a warmer, wetter climate and fertilization from the added carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. The study was made possible thanks to a two-decade-long data record from the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) instruments on NASA's Terra and Aqua satellites. "Now with the MODIS data, we see that humans are also contributing.

The study says that the greening trend may change in the future depending on various factors. For example, increased food production in India is facilitated by groundwater irrigation. As the groundwater is depleted, the trend may change.

The researchers also pointed out that the gain in greenness around the world does not necessarily offset the loss of natural vegetation in tropical regions such as Brazil and Indonesia.

5. Zoologist discovers 'crying' snake in Arunachal Pradesh

A new species of 'crying' snake has been discovered in Lepa-Rada district of Arunachal Pradesh.

The discovery of the non-venomous crying keelback, whose zoological

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white, interrupted stripe along its body; three rows of irregular dark blotches (not vertically aligned) on each side; six cream, elongated spots on its anterior part and a smooth dorsal scale row.

The snake, preferring to live near streams along paddy fields, was found to feed on small fish, tadpole, frogs and geckos.

Globally snakes are represented by 3,709 species. The northeast is home to some 110 species.

name is *Hebius lacrima*, has been published in *Zootaxa*, the New Zealand-based scientific mega-journal for animal taxonomy.

The name for this keelback was suggested because of a dark spot under its eyes looking like black tear that interrupts a white stripe running along the upper jaw to the back of its head and beyond.

Photographs of a few other such snakes revealed that was the average length of an adult.

The crying keelback had to be compared with 44 species of snakes worldwide under the genus *Hebius*.

The crying keelback can be differentiated from all other species of the genus *Hebius* by the combination of a distinctive broad,

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