

MoS IT favours some kind of compromise of cross-border data transfer

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MINISTER OF STATE for electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar on Monday favoured some kind of compromise between cross border transfer of data and privacy of citizens.

Speaking during the annual lecture of the Public Affairs Forum of India (PAFI), the minister said that the government understands that internet is not something that can be walled off and bordered off but at the same time there are concerns around the fact that every Indian citizen is entitled to their fundamental rights to privacy and, therefore, data and information privacy. "The nature of the compromise and the nature of how that could be worded in a policy, we will wait and see. But we don't expect to be an island in the global internet. We expect to lead the charge in innovation in global internet, rather than being an outlier. We are not China for sure and I don't want to get into specifics, but we understand the contours of the discussion," Chandrasekhar said in reply to a query around cross border data transfer.

The government is working on a data protection law, that will look into all the aspects of data transfer and protection. The government has been consistently maintaining its approach to data protection in a way that rights of an Indian need to be protected but it should be done in a way without creating any major disruption or increasing the cost of compliance or reducing the ease of doing business for investors and businesses and start-ups.

The minister stressed the government will ensure that internet remains open in the country. "On the issue of internet, our view is very clear. Policy making, rule-making, every action we take including investments in public good, would be aimed at ensuring that internet is always open and open not just from state control but open in terms of influence, control, market share, all of that," he said.