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Recent efforts towards creating a robust data protection in India focus on one aspect across various parts of government Machinery. Data Localization. Is data localization really a Solution? Discuss.

The objective of various government Machinery to insist on Data localization is to enable the Indian Law Enforcement agencies to access data. But the basic error in the recommendations is that the belief of location of data should determine who has access to it.

In this regard the draft personal data protection bill mandates to store data which is only related to Indians. This implies that the law enforcement agencies can only access data related to crimes where both the victim and the perpetrator are Indians. And this does not address the access to data irrespective of transnational crimes.

By insisting on data localization in India we can promote the growth of data centers and cloud computing industries in India. In respect of other sectors it is forcing them to invest more capital for the purpose of storing data in India. And it is also creating a negative impression in the minds of foreign investors.

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Data localization may also lead to

- 1) Data theft.
- 2) Misuse of data to manipulate populations elections, etc..
- 3) Data theft of government sensitive information.

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Hence, the provisions of data localization recommended by different committees only addresses the problems partially. To achieve better data accessibility a clear laid down process of bilateral agreements with foreign governments should be carried out.