

6 January 2025

Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Rules

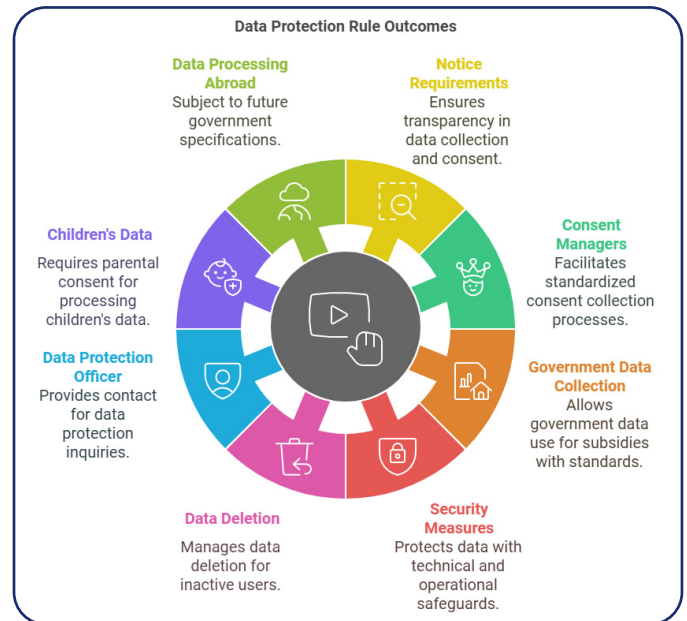
Context: The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) recently unveiled the draft of the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Rules, 2025, which are a critical step toward operationalizing the Digital Personal Data Protection Act (DPDPA) that was notified in August 2023.

Key Features of the Draft Rules

- **Notice Requirements:** Data fiduciaries must inform users about the data they are collecting, the purpose for its collection, and provide a clear account of how to give informed consent for data processing.
- **Consent Managers:** The rules allow for the registration of "consent managers" to work with data fiduciaries. These entities will help ensure that user consent is collected in a specified format for processing personal data.
- **Government Data Collection:** The government can collect personal data for providing subsidies or benefits, subject to certain standards. Data collected for "statistical" purposes is exempt from these requirements.
- **Security Measures:** Data fiduciaries must take reasonable security safeguards, both technical and operational, to protect personal data. In the event of a data breach, the Data Protection Board of India (DPBI) must be informed within 72 hours.
- **Data Deletion for Inactive Users:** If a user is inactive on a platform (such as an e-commerce site, social media, or online gaming), their data must be deleted after a 48-hour notice period, allowing them time to prevent the deletion.
- **Contact Information for Data Protection Officer:** Data fiduciaries must provide contact information for a data protection officer on their website, particularly for significant data fiduciaries who are required to conduct periodic Data Protection Impact Assessments and audits.
- **Children's Data:** The rules emphasize that personal data of children should not be processed without verifiable parental consent. The consent may be collected using identity and age details provided by a

trusted authority, such as a Digital Locker service.

- **Data Processing Abroad:** The rules state that data processing outside of India is subject to future requirements that the government may specify through orders.



About Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023:

- The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (DPDP Act) was enacted on August 11, 2023, after several iterations. It replaces Section 43A of the Information Technology Act, 2000, and the Information Technology Rules, 2011.
- The Digital Personal Data Protection Act (DPDPA) applies to data that is processed digitally, excluding data handled in an analog manner. It aims to protect individuals' privacy rights while providing a framework for the responsible use of personal data by organizations. This Act came after years of discussions and revisions, beginning with recommendations made by a high-level expert group in 2011 under the chairmanship of former Delhi High Court Chief Justice AP Shah.

Importance of Data Protection:

- The rules and Act are in line with the Supreme Court's 2017 ruling on the right to privacy, which recognized privacy as a fundamental right under India's Constitution. With the introduction of these rules, India takes a significant step toward robust data protection,

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6 January 2025

aligning with international standards while addressing the unique challenges of the digital economy.

Dynamic Ground Water Resource Assessment Report

Context: Recently, The Dynamic Ground Water Resource Assessment Report for 2024 was released by the Union Minister of Jal Shakti, Shri CR Patil, on December 31, 2024. It provides an updated assessment of the groundwater resources in India, carried out jointly by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) and the States/UTs. The report helps stakeholders, including government bodies, policymakers, and the public, take informed decisions regarding groundwater management and interventions.

Key Findings:

- **Total Annual Groundwater Recharge:** The total annual groundwater recharge has increased by 15 Billion Cubic Meters (BCM), reaching 446.90 BCM in 2024, compared to previous assessments.
- **Annual Groundwater Extraction:** Groundwater extraction has decreased by 3 BCM from 2017, standing at 245.64 BCM in 2024.
- **Average Stage of Groundwater Extraction:** The average stage of groundwater extraction for India is at 60.47%.

Categorization of groundwater

- Safe: 4951 units (73.4% of total units)
- Semi-critical: 711 units (10.5%)
- Critical: 206 units (3.05%)
- Over-exploited: 751 units (11.1%)
- Saline: 127 units (1.8%)

Groundwater recharge and extraction findings in last five years:

- **Recharge Increase:** Groundwater recharge has increased by 15 BCM from the 2017 assessment. Specifically, recharge from tanks, ponds, and water conservation structures has grown consistently over the last five years, showing an increase of 0.39 BCM in 2024 compared to 2023.
- **Extraction Decrease:** Groundwater extraction has decreased by 3 BCM from the 2017 assessment.
- The percentage of Safe assessment units has increased

from 62.6% in 2017 to 73.4% in 2024, showing positive progress in groundwater management.

- The percentage of Over-exploited units has declined from 17.24% in 2017 to 11.13% in 2024, indicating a reduction in the areas where groundwater resources are being overused.

How the report aids in policymaking?

- The Dynamic Ground Water Resource Assessment Report provides vital data on the status of groundwater resources across the country. It assists policymakers, government agencies, and other stakeholders in:
 - » Identifying regions that require focused conservation efforts.
 - » Implementing strategies to prevent over-exploitation.
 - » Promoting sustainable water management practices.
 - » Making informed decisions on water conservation infrastructure and initiatives.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

Context: The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is a significant event that celebrates the contributions of the overseas Indian community to India's growth and development. The 18th edition of PBD will be held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, from January 8 to 10, 2025. This year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend the event in Bhubaneswar for the first time. The theme for PBD 2025 is "Diaspora's Contribution to a Viksit Bharat," emphasizing the vital role of the Indian diaspora in the nation's progress.

History of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas:

- PBD was first celebrated on January 9, 2003, to recognize the invaluable contributions of the Indian diaspora. The date also commemorates Mahatma Gandhi's return to India from South Africa in 1915, marking a historic moment in India's freedom struggle.
- The day acknowledges his role as the greatest Pravasi (overseas Indian). Initially an annual event, PBD was revised in 2015 to be held every two years to focus on enhancing engagement with the diaspora community. Over time, it has become a major platform for connecting the Indian diaspora with their cultural roots and encouraging their continued involvement in India's

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6 January 2025

development.

Significance of the event:

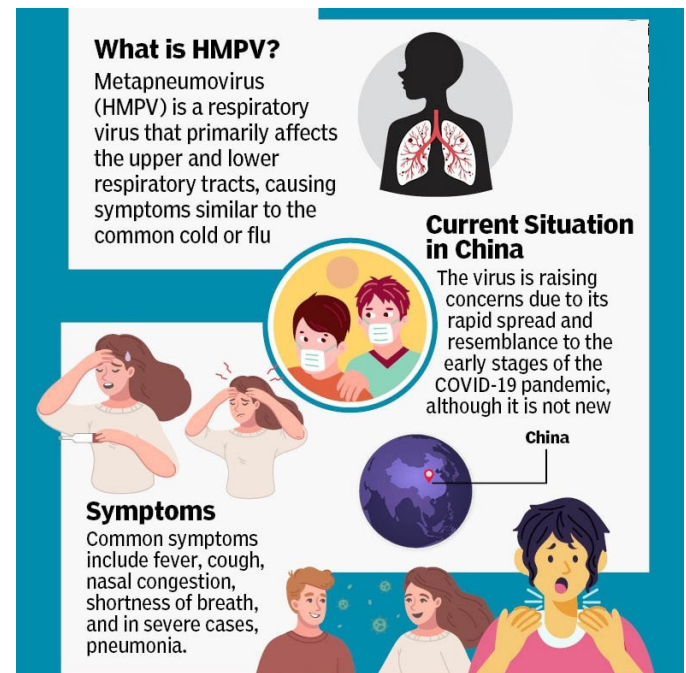
- **Cultural Significance:** PBD is a celebration of the deep cultural ties between India and its global diaspora. The event provides an opportunity for overseas Indians to reconnect with their heritage and culture. It fosters cultural exchange between India and the countries where these diaspora communities reside, enabling the sharing of traditions, art, and values. This exchange strengthens bonds and enhances mutual understanding between India and its overseas population.
- **Economic Significance:** The Indian diaspora contributes significantly to India's economy through remittances, which provide vital financial support to families and communities across India. Moreover, PBD encourages overseas Indians to invest in India, boosting the country's economic growth and development. The event serves as a platform to promote business opportunities, entrepreneurship, and innovations that benefit both India and the countries where the diaspora resides.
- **Social Significance:** PBD helps build a sense of community among overseas Indians, facilitating networking and collaboration. Many members of the diaspora contribute to social causes in India, such as education, healthcare, and poverty alleviation. Their charitable activities and investments improve the quality of life for millions of Indians and help address societal challenges.
- **Diplomatic Significance:** PBD strengthens India's diplomatic relations with countries that have large overseas Indian populations. It serves as an example of diaspora diplomacy, where India engages with its diaspora to promote national interests. The event also helps enhance India's influence on the global stage, building goodwill with foreign governments and international communities.
- **Personal Significance:** For overseas Indians, PBD provides a sense of belonging and pride in their heritage. The event inspires them to contribute actively to India's development, whether through investments, social work, or business ventures. It helps the diaspora feel connected to India and encourages their ongoing involvement in the nation's progress.

HMPV Outbreak

Context: The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is keeping a close watch on the reported outbreak of Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) in China. The outbreak has particularly affected children under 14 years of age. However, the Ministry has reassured that, while China has seen a surge in respiratory illnesses related to HMPV, India has registered few cases of HMPV as of now.

The Outbreak in China:

- China is currently experiencing a spike in cases of HMPV, with a noticeable increase in respiratory illnesses, especially in children.



What is HMPV?
Metapneumovirus (HMPV) is a respiratory virus that primarily affects the upper and lower respiratory tracts, causing symptoms similar to the common cold or flu.

Current Situation in China
The virus is raising concerns due to its rapid spread and resemblance to the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, although it is not new.

Symptoms
Common symptoms include fever, cough, nasal congestion, shortness of breath, and in severe cases, pneumonia.

China

The infographic includes illustrations of a human silhouette with lungs, a globe with a red dot on China, and people showing symptoms like coughing and sneezing.

About HMPV:

- HMPV, first identified in 2001, is a member of the Paramyxoviridae family, which also includes the Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). The virus can cause both upper and lower respiratory diseases and affects individuals of all ages, though it is particularly serious for young children, older adults, and those with weakened immune systems. Symptoms typically include fever, cough, nasal congestion, and difficulty breathing. In severe cases, it can lead to bronchitis or pneumonia.
- The virus spreads through respiratory droplets from

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6 January 2025

coughing and sneezing, and close personal contact, such as touching infected surfaces and then touching the face. Its incubation period typically lasts from three to six days, with the illness duration depending on the severity.

Comparison of HMPV with Influenza, RSV, and SARS-CoV-2:

Virus Family

- HMPV: Paramyxoviridae
- Influenza: Orthomyxoviridae
- RSV: Paramyxoviridae
- SARS-CoV-2: Coronaviridae

Genomic Material

- HMPV: RNA (single-stranded, negative-sense)
- Influenza: RNA (single-stranded, negative-sense)
- RSV: RNA (single-stranded, negative-sense)
- SARS-CoV-2: RNA (single-stranded, positive-sense)

Transmission

- HMPV: Airborne droplets, close contact
- Influenza: Airborne droplets, close contact
- RSV: Airborne droplets, close contact
- SARS-CoV-2: Airborne droplets, close contact, fomites

Symptoms

- HMPV: Cough, wheezing, fever, congestion, difficulty breathing
- Influenza: Fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue, body aches

- RSV: Cough, wheezing, shortness of breath, fever
- SARS-CoV-2: Fever, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, loss of taste/smell

Incubation Period

- HMPV: 3 to 6 days
- Influenza: 1 to 4 days
- RSV: 4 to 6 days
- SARS-CoV-2: 2 to 14 days (average 5-6 days)

Seasonality

- HMPV: Typically winter and spring
- Influenza: Winter months
- RSV: Winter months
- SARS-CoV-2: Year-round, with peaks depending on the region

Vaccine Availability

- HMPV: No vaccine available
- Influenza: Annual flu vaccine available
- RSV: No vaccine available
- SARS-CoV-2: Vaccines available (e.g., Pfizer, Moderna)

Treatment

- HMPV: Supportive care (oxygen, antivirals not common)
- Influenza: Antiviral medications (e.g., oseltamivir), supportive care
- RSV: Supportive care, bronchodilators, steroids
- SARS-CoV-2: Antiviral treatments (e.g., remdesivir), monoclonal antibodies, supportive care

Power Packed News

West Bengal won the 33rd Santosh Trophy

- West Bengal won the Santosh Trophy for the 33rd time by defeating Kerala in the final on 1 January 2025. The only decisive goal of the match was scored by Robbie Hansda in extra time.
- Hansda also became the top scorer of this tournament. This victory reflects West Bengal's historical superiority in football.
- The Santosh Trophy, which is a state-level football competition, is held under the All India Football Federation. This victory adds another important chapter to the football history of West Bengal.



India's first glass bridge

- India's first glass bridge built over the sea in Kanyakumari was inaugurated on 1 January 2025. This bridge connects the Tiruvalluvar statue and the Vivekananda Rock Memorial.
- Built at a cost of Rs 37 crore, the bridge is 77 meters long and 10 meters wide. It



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6 January 2025

is designed to withstand sea breeze and high humidity.

- This bridge allows tourists to walk between the two sites safely while enjoying the sea view.
- The project is part of efforts to develop Kanyakumari as a major tourist destination.

Rajagopala Chidambaram

- Eminent physicist Rajagopala Chidambaram, who played a key role in India's nuclear programme, died on January 4 at the age of 88.
- His pivotal role in India's journey as a nuclear power began with his participation in the 1974 "Smiling Buddha" nuclear test and continued with his leadership during the 1998 Pokhran-II tests, which established India's position as a nuclear power on the global stage.
- Born in Tamil Nadu in 1936, Chidambaram was an alumnus of Chennai's Presidency College and Bengaluru's Indian Institute of Science. During his illustrious career, he held several key positions, including Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India and Director of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC).
- He also chaired the Atomic Energy Commission and served as Chairman of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency.
- Beyond nuclear advancement, Chidambaram made unprecedented contributions to high-pressure physics, crystallography and materials science, laying the foundation for modern materials research in India. A recipient of the Padma Vibhushan and the Padma Shri, Chidambaram's legacy continues to inspire generations in India and beyond.



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