

'Draft e-commerce policy will be in line with Srikrishna panel proposals'

The draft e-commerce policy being formulated by the government will be in keeping with the recommendations of the Justice Srikrishna Committee report on data privacy, according to Commerce Secretary-Designate Anup Wadhawan. Mr. Wadhawan will take over as Commerce Secretary on August 1.

The draft personal data protection Bill 2018, submitted by the Justice B.N. Srikrishna-headed expert panel on Friday, proposed that critical personal data of Indian citizens be processed in centres located within the country.

"Most countries dealing with this issue have taken a nuanced approach," Mr. Wadhawan said at a press briefing following the second meeting of the think tank created to deliberate on the e-commerce policy. "We will come up with a policy that will promote the free flow of business as well as address security and privacy concerns."

The policy will be in line with the Srikrishna Committee recommendations."

Critical data

The draft law recommended by the Srikrishna Committee has left it to the Central government to notify categories of personal data that will be considered as critical, and hence necessarily be located in India. Other personal data can be transferred out of the country, but a copy must be retained in India.

"The working groups and think tanks made comprehensive recommendations on the draft e-commerce policy on issues ranging from data flow to protection, grievance redressal, and data localisation," Mr. Wadhawan said. "The recommendations also included the regulatory arrangement that could emerge for the sector."

While the Secretary-Designate did not specify a time-frame in which the e-commerce policy would be finalised, he said it would be in the "earlier possible time-frame, since we can't afford to have a vacuum in e-commerce regulation."

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