**The Archive**

Fig 0: March 2011, Ratu Block, Ranchi. A tribal woman gets enrolled in Aadhaar, in the first year of its full operation across Bihar. Inage taken in the first stage of the CSCS Identity project field work.

**SECTION 1**

Fig 1. The Tenth Five-year Plan, 2002-07, and usually seen as the point when e-governance was launched in India. It saw the implementation of the Information Technology Act of 2000 and the founding of the Ministry of Information Technology, the mass computerisation of government departments and the launch of the ERNET linking academic and research institutions in India.

Fig 2. February 2016, Hisar, Haryana. Internet shutdown under Section 144 directly targeting ‘WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Flickr, Tumblr and Google +’. This occurred in the wake of protests by the Jat community for inclusion of their caste under the Other Backward castes (OBC) community.

Fig 3. February 2016, Jind district, Haryana. District Magistrate Order for internet shutdown under Section 144 of the Indian Criminal Procedure Code, in the wake of major agitations by farmers in Punjab and neighbouring states.

Fig 4. March 2020, Bangalore. Karnataka government guidelines for self-quarantining using the Quarantine Watch mobile app during the first COVID lockdown.

Fig 5. March 2020, Delhi. Delhi police put out a Twitter post, following the arrest of the student activist Safoora Zargar, for her role in the protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019.

Fig 6. April 2020, Delhi. The Cabinet Secretariat of the President of India announces a Committee for implementing what is explicitly described as a ‘citizen app’, ostensibly for combating COVID.

Fig 7. April 2020, Delhi. Broadcast Engineering Consultants India, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, puts out a call for a Covid Tracking tool that is directly a surveillance app, which should be able to ‘identify close contacts, frequent contacts as well as occasional Contacts’, ‘collect information like where the suspect has spent most of his/her time and who all he or she has met’, ‘zero in on connections with Watch List suspects’, ‘Identify a suspects behaviour, see what he or she does on specific days of the week, where does he or she order food from, where does the suspect go for regular walks, where does he/she work during the day, where does he/she sleep at night etc’.

**SECTION 2**

Fig 8. October 1975. One of the earliest project outlines for the management of a centralised data system by the Planning Commission.

Fig 9. April 1976, Delhi. Parliament of India Public Accounts Committee 1975-97: the first explicit governmental concern about hacking and data security.

Fig 10. May 1976. J.G. Krishnayya’s *aide memoire* on the design of an information system for a computerised data bank by the Planning Commission.

Fig 11. 1987. N. Seshagiri *et al*: in many ways a founding document for the NICNET, outlining a hierarchical networked system for all arms of the Government by the National Informatics Centre, together with a distributed DBMS system.

Fig 12. December 1990. N. Seshagiri’s forecast for what the future holds for NIC, especially in regard to ISDNs creating a *diversity of networks* with different priorities, as against a single, hierarchical and centralised network.

Fig 13. 1996. Two decades after J.G. Krishnayya’s initial outlines, the National informatics Centre outlines DISNIC, a decentralized information architecture that connected departments through a network enabling micro-level, village-centered, planning.

Fig 14. 1999, Bangalore. Visual interface for the Simputer, a handheld smartcard-compliant device invented by scientists from the Indian Institute of Science.

Fig 15. June 2000, Delhi. The Information Technology Act, including its Sections 66A and 69A, digitally upgrading, and also significantly transforming, the right to free speech.

Fig 16. December 2003, Delhi. The first major amendment to the 1955 Citizenship Act, with the Citizenship Registration and National Identity Cards Rules.

Fig 17. 2004, Bangalore. Major report on the consequences of Bhoomi, or the digitization of land records, and the nature of change pre-and post-Bhoomi. Information and Communications Technologies for Development*: A Comparative Analysis of Impacts and Costs from India*: report funded by The Department of Information Technology (DIT) and Infosys Technologies, Bangalore.

Fig 18. March 2006. The National Informatics Centre’s Digital inclusion project targeting rural India as well as arguing for localisation of data, coinciding with the first meetings of the National E-Governance Plan the same year.

Fig 19. May 2006. The National E-Governance Plan (NeGP) outlines for creating e-districts, namely the electronic delivery ‘high volume citizen-centric services’ at the district level that are not included in any of its other 39 mission-mode projects.

Fig 20. 2008. Expert Committee on Metadata and Data Standards to ‘identify *each and every person uniquely* at the national level’ to ensure ‘interoperability of information related to individuals collected by various Govt./non Gov. organizations’.

Fig 21. December 2008, Delhi. Second Administrative Reforms Commission, report on ‘Promoting E-Governance, the SMART Way Forward’ introducing the concept of ‘SMART’ (Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent’), also transforming governance into a form of service providing, with significant consequences to social and economic rights.

Fig 22. 2009, Delhi. The Planning Commission produces the original founding document of the Unique identification Authority of India (UIDAI).

Fig 23. April 2010. Inaugural document of the UIDAI, ‘Creating a Unique identity Number for Every resident in India’ (UIDAI Working paper 1.1), outlining a ‘new approach to identity’. This document does not exist on UIDAI’s database any longer. Also: the Aadhaar enrolment ecosystem as envisaged in the initial document, as a public-private partnership, leading to several questions about the security of the data.

Fig 24. June 2010. Aadhar Working paper on its envisaged role in the Public Distribution System (PDS) for food security. Coming on the heels of the Right to Food campaign and the National food security Bill that was even then being drafted, it made an already controversial Targeted Public Distribution System defined by poverty levels even more problematic.

Fig 25. 2011. Aadhar and National Population demographic data forms. Aadhar’s data limited to name, age, address and 9for minors) relationship to enroller. Notably, the linking of Aadhar to bank account was kept optional. NPR by contrast had 12 datasets.

Fig 26. 2015. UIDAI workflow pattern, juxtaposed with the big picture image of E-Kranti (the E-Revolution), the second stage of the National E-Governance Plan. Defined by the famous slogan that it is about ‘transformation, not translation’, and that it is an ‘integrated’ set of services based on ‘infrastructure on demand’, run largely on cloud and mobile applications.

Fig 27. 2016. Free Basics, a collaborative project between Facebook and the Government of India widely viewed as threatening the neutrality of the internet, mounts a direct signature drive to ask people to write to the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India.

Fig 28. September 2018, Delhi. Supreme Court of India, Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (Retd) versus Union of India, on the legal validity of the Aadhar Bill. Dissenting judgment by Y.V. Chandrachud, on the ubiquity of Aadhaar control of everyday life, and the ‘chilling effect’ of the ‘gaze of the state’.

Fig 29. June 2019, Delhi. Lok Sabha Parliamentary question on the nature of data Aadhar collects, and the answer ‘UIDAI do not collect information regarding race, religion, caste, tribe etc’. This was part of the original Aadhar Act, 2016. This clashes with several of the KYC-Plus data generated, which specifically ask for Caste data as well as economic category information. Alongside all of these is the famous dog, ‘Tommy Singh’, for whom an Aadhar card was created.

**SECTION 3**

Fig 30. 2009-2012. Tensions rise around state control and social media. (Above) The UIDAI’s outlining of their partner registrars, and sidelining the NPR as ‘also’ one of the UIDAI’s partners, on condition that the NPR ‘incorporat(es) some additional procedures into the RGI data collection mechanism, in order to make it UID-ready’. (Below left: the original 2012 Facebook post that led to the Supreme Court case known as the ‘Shreya Singhal case’, challenging the validity of Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, 2000.

Fig 31. (Top left) the original Facebook post that led to the Shreya Singhal judgment. (Top right) The ‘Pink Chaddi’ campaign by a ‘Consortium of Pub-Going, Loose and Forward Women’, as a rejoinder to a Hindu right-wing organization’s targeting of young people celebrating Valentine’s Day, asking for gifts of pink knickers be sent to that organization. (Below): Twitter reposts by ‘Shami Witness’ in 2014, arrested for pro-ISIS views for whom he was ‘aggregating information’, in the words of Karnataka’s Director General of Police.

Fig 32. July 2010. The UIDAI signs a memorandum of Understanding with the National Coalition of Organisations for Security of Migrant Workers, specifically providing for enabling migrants to register with Aadhar. This was a critical demonstration of how ‘portable identities’ worked. A decade later this would be a major issue in March 2020, when the first Covid lockdown was declared and millions of such migrants found themselves without support in their workplaces but were unable to travel home because they could not prove their home address.

Fig 33. 2015, Delhi. Supreme Court of India Shreya Singhal vs U.O.I on 24 March, 2015, defineds what ‘information’ is defined by the Information Technology Act.

Fig 34. September 2015, Manipur. The Churachandpur protests, following protests by Kuki groups opposing the introduction of Inner Line Permits, led to a week-long internet shutdown. Nine people died in police firing widely seen as directly instigated by that shutdown. In an astonishing display of physical occupation, for an entire year the bodies of the nine dead were kept on public display in mauve coffins under a shamiana, in front of which daily speeches occurred under a sign that said ‘Hills & Valley as separate entities: the new normal, learn to live with it’.

Fig 35. August 2017, Delhi. the Temporary Shutdown of Telecom Services (TSTS) Rules are passed.

Fig 36. 2018. The Justice B.N. Srikrishna Committee (aka *A Free and Fair Digital Economy: Protecting Privacy, Empowering Indians*, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology) outlined what it considers ‘Sensitive Personal Data’, namely the data that should be the primary concerns of the draft Data Protection Bill that followed in 2019.

Fig 37. 2019, Delhi. The final draft of the Privacy Bill, formally withdrawn in August 2022. This had followed the Supreme Court judgment of 2017 establishing privacy to be part of Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. Key sections, involving Data Fiduciaries, the localisation of data, and the exemptions that allow Central Government violation of privacy, were among its contentious issues.

Fig 38. August 2019. The amendment of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, targeting individuals in addition to organizations as ‘terrorist’.

Fig 39. December 2019: Citizenship Amendment Act 2019, specifically identifying religions that qualified for Indian citizenship.

Fig 40. March 2020, New Delhi. Use of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules of 2011 to prevent ‘false news’ on Covid. These rules held ‘intermediaries’, more precisely ‘significant social media intermediaries’ (SSMIs), with registered users in India above a notified threshold. In 2021, a year later, these rules were further amended to require SSMIs to ‘observe certain additional due diligence such as appointing certain personnel for compliance, enabling identification of the first originator of the information on its platform under certain conditions, and deploying technology-based measures on a best-effort basis to identify certain types of content’.

Fig 41. June 2021. Arsenal Consulting, a Boston-based company specializing in computer forensics, analyses hard disks by several academics, activists and lawyers imprisoned under the UAPA for what has come to be known as the ‘Bhima-Koregaon’ case, and proves that much of the evidence produced by the police alleging conspiracies to wage war against the Indian state were as a result of malware planted.

Fig 42. January 2020, Srinagar. State-wide order by the Inspector General of Police for blanket internet shutdown under the Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (TSTS) Rules, 2017.

Fig 43. January 2020, Delhi. Supreme Court of India - Anuradha Bhasin vs Union Of India on 10 January, 2020 – the major case involving the legality of internet shutdowns with reference to the 2019 shutdown in Kashmir. Sections 148 and 149 deal with the concept of the ‘chilling effect’, and its role in suspending free speech.

Fig 44. March 2020. The National Disaster Management Act, 2005, is invoked, producing Emergency-like conditions in the name of the pandemic.

Fig 45. March 2020, Mumbai. After the Covid outbreak, amid widespread rumours about the nature of the disease, but also community information around the availability of hospital beds (often contrasting with official pronouncements), the Commissioner of Police uses Section 144 of the Code of Criminal procedure (right to public assembly) to stop information dissemination under ‘Whatsapp, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, Instagram etc’.

Fig 46. April 2020, Delhi. The Covid-tracking app Arogya Setu is rendered mandatory in all government office and for all employees, in contrast to the explicit declarations that the app was not legally mandatory.

Fig 47. January 2022. Youtube Licensing policy as part of its new Terms of Service.