



## Update debate

### *Issue: Need for data protection law in India (GS 3)*

WhatsApp's decision to delay the update of its privacy policy, following a backlash from its users.

#### **Highlights:**

1. Problems for the Facebook-owned app started earlier this month when it announced an update to its terms of service and privacy policy, according to which users would no longer be able to opt-out of sharing data with Facebook. February 8 was kept as the deadline for the new terms to be accepted.
2. This triggered a mass exodus from WhatsApp, the likes of which it has never encountered, not even in the aftermath of the Cambridge Analytica scandal.
3. The WhatsApp policy update has clearly spooked many users, who, concerned about their privacy getting compromised, have shifted to alternative platforms such as Signal and Telegram.

#### **Business interaction**

1. It has put out numerous messages and taken out advertisements to convey that the changes are "related to optional business features on WhatsApp, and provides further transparency about how we collect and use data".
2. Millions of business interactions take place every day on WhatsApp, and the new privacy updates are supposed to make these easier while also enabling personalised ads on Facebook.

#### **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and India Imperative**

1. Even then, it cannot force these changes on its users in Europe. For, Europe's stringent General Data Protection Regulation, more popularly called GDPR, prevents such sharing between apps.
2. Users there are in control of their data much more than anywhere else in the world. India could do with such a law. All India has is a draft version of a law, and it has been so for a few years now.
3. Privacy of a billion citizens is too important a thing to be left just to the practices of a commercial enterprise. It will be reassuring if it is guaranteed by a strong law.



## Bridging the gulf between dream and reality

*Issue: Social and communal harmony in the country ensuring equality, justice and dignity, Lessons from lives of great leaders (GS 1 and GS 4)*

**Context:** Dr Martin Luther King Jr.'s ideas and his movement have enduring appeal, including in India. Dr Martin Luther King Jr. left setting the U.S. on the path to a more inclusive society and polity. It assumes significance in the context of persisting racism.

### Dr King's dream

If there is one idea that captures the essence of Dr King's contribution, it is his dream of an inclusive America. In his 1963 oration eloquently unpacked his vision for an inclusive and equitable America, which is famously remembered as the "I have a dream" speech.

### The Civil Rights Movement

1. Dr King's contribution to the Civil Rights Movement was remarkable.
2. There have been many African-American leaders who have propagated the message of freedom and dignity since the mid-19th century.
3. Among them, Dr King was unique; he changed the very architecture of the movement. He added flesh to these insightful ideas by leading a relentless and nonviolent movement.
4. The movement adapted ideas from India's forays into civil disobedience. The 381-day Montgomery bus boycott demonstrated the potential for nonviolent mass protest and galvanised the Civil Rights Movement.
5. Right through the movement, Dr King strived to be the conscience and unifier of a nation that was deeply divided into racial lines.
6. He bridged the gulf between the dream and reality. Dr King's major contribution to the U.S. in general and African-Americans, in particular, is in invigorating the benchmarks of equality, justice and dignity.

### Inspiration for India

May India, where there are continuing atrocities on the Dalit, tribal and minority communities due to a hierarchical social structure, as well as the marginalised communities across the world, draw inspiration from Dr King and strive for a more inclusive, just and equal society.