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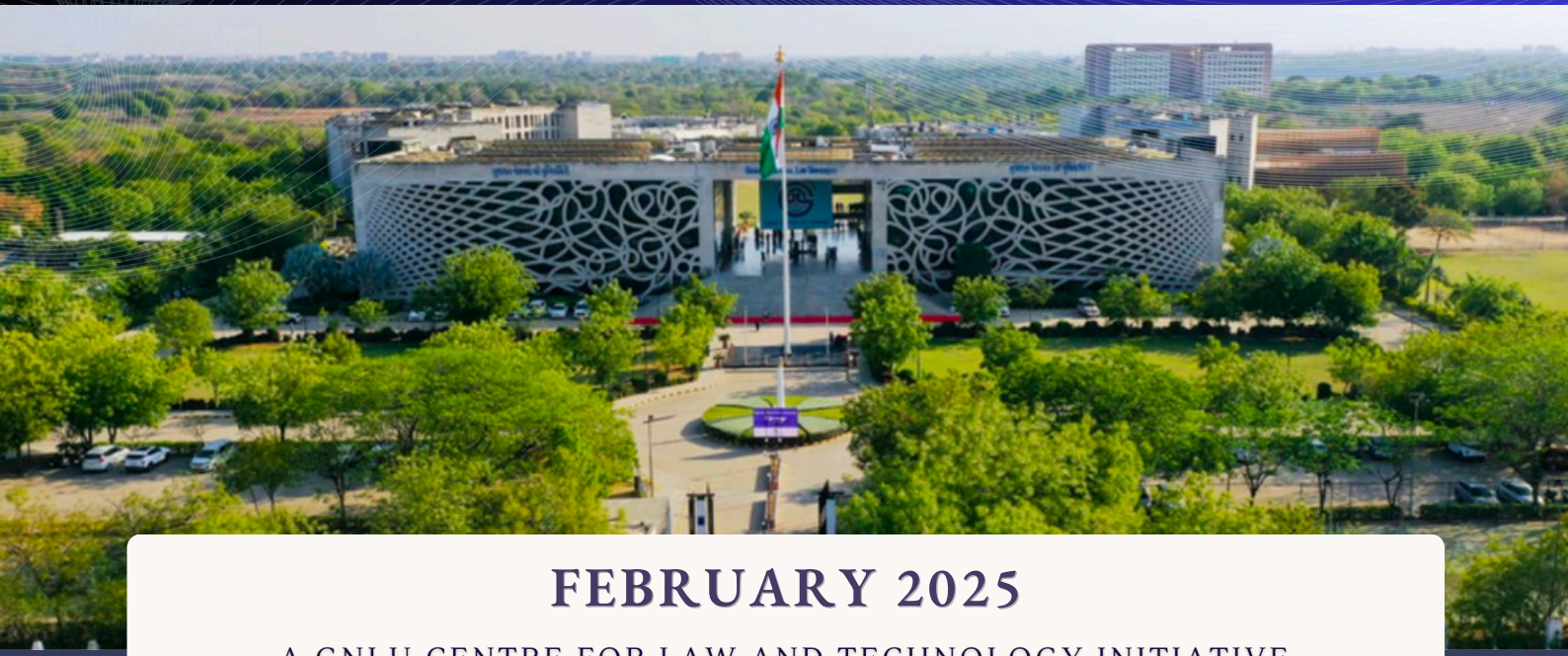

# FEBRUARY 2025

A GNLU CENTRE FOR LAW AND TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE

# Monthly Newsletter - TechTalk

Gujarat National Law University

Welcome to the GNLU Centre for Law and Technology Newsletter! Serving as the conduit to the dynamic intersection of science, technology, and the law, our mission is to provide updates on the latest developments, promote academic excellence, and empower legal professionals to navigate this ever-evolving landscape. Join us in bridging the gap between these crucial fields and shaping the future of legal practice in our interconnected world.

## Enclosed in this newsletter are the following highlights:

Updates on law and technology, showcasing the latest developments in this ever-evolving field. Our curated content might just spark your next research topic idea. Stay informed and stay inspired and keep reading!

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# INSIDE THIS ISSUE

## HEADLINES OF THE MONTH

# "U.S. Supreme Court Addresses Critical Tech-Related Legal Issues"

The U.S. Supreme Court's docket for 2025 includes a range of technology-related cases that could have significant legal and societal implications. These cases cover diverse areas, including medical technology, digital platforms, privacy rights, and environmental regulations.

One key case involves a Tennessee law banning gender-affirming medical treatments for transgender minors. The Court's ruling could set a precedent for future regulations on medical technologies and healthcare rights, particularly regarding experimental and emerging treatments.

Another case deals with ghost guns—untraceable firearms created using 3D printing technology. The government seeks to regulate these weapons under federal gun laws, but opponents argue that such regulation would violate Second Amendment rights. A ruling in favor of the government could lead to stricter control over additive manufacturing in weaponry.

The Court is also reviewing cases on age verification laws for online pornography, which could impact data privacy and digital censorship. Additionally, a controversial ruling on TikTok's ban in certain U.S. states is under scrutiny, with questions about national security versus free speech and corporate rights.

Other significant cases include issues related to AI-driven workplace surveillance, tax exemptions for religious institutions, and nuclear waste storage policies, demonstrating the Court's increasing involvement in technological and environmental legal matters.
Given the broad scope of these cases, the Supreme Court's rulings could reshape U.S. legal frameworks governing technology, civil rights, and corporate accountability, making 2025 a pivotal year for law and tech.

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# "INDIA MOVES TOWARDS COMPREHENSIVE SPACE SECTOR LEGISLATION"

The Indian government is actively working on new legislation to govern its rapidly expanding space sector. This move follows four years of progressive space reforms, during which India has significantly increased private sector participation in satellite construction and space launches.

Union Minister Jitendra Singh recently announced that the government is drafting a Space Activities Bill, which will provide statutory backing to these reforms. The primary aim is to position India as a major player in the global space economy, which is projected to grow exponentially in the coming decades.

Key features of the proposed bill include:

- Regulations for private companies participating in satellite launches, space mining, and exploratory missions.
- A licensing framework for commercial space operations
- Liability provisions to address damages caused by Indian satellites.
- Provisions for research and development incentives to promote innovation.

India's maiden human spaceflight mission, Gaganyaan, is also progressing well, with an uncrewed test flight expected in 2026. The government is keen on leveraging this success to establish a sustainable and competitive space ecosystem that aligns with international best practices.

With a robust legal framework in place, India could attract foreign investments and partnerships, strengthening its space diplomacy and fostering scientific advancements. The bill is expected to be tabled in Parliament later this year.

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# "Experts Call for a Global Legal Framework on Space Sustainability"

As the global space industry grows, experts are warning that Earth's orbit is becoming dangerously overcrowded. The number of satellites is set to increase from 9,000 to over 60,000 by 2030, raising concerns about space debris and orbital sustainability.

Scientists are advocating for an internationally binding treaty that would regulate satellite launches, enforce responsibility for space debris, and ensure sustainable practices in space exploration. Without a structured legal framework, experts fear that Earth's orbit could become as polluted and unregulated as the High Seas, where overfishing and environmental degradation have led to severe consequences.

Proposed legal measures include:

- Requiring companies to manage space debris throughout a satellite's lifecycle.
- Financial penalties for abandoned or malfunctioning satellites that contribute to space junk.
- International collaboration to track and mitigate the risks of collisions in orbit.

Drawing parallels with ocean plastic pollution, experts emphasize that proactive legal action is necessary before orbital conditions become unsustainable.

The United Nations and major space agencies have yet to establish a legally binding agreement, making this one of the most urgent legal challenges in space policy today.


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# "India's New Aviation Bill to Reform Aircraft Leasing Regulations"

India Introduces New Bill to Reform Aircraft Leasing Rules
The Protection of Interests in Aircraft Objects Bill, 2025, recently introduced in the Rajya Sabha, seeks to enhance the rights of aircraft lessors by allowing them to reclaim planes if airlines default on lease payments. This reform is expected to lower costs for airlines, boost investor confidence, and make India's aviation sector more secure and competitive.

The urgency for the legislation arose after the National Company Law Tribunal's ruling in the Go First case, which prevented lessors from repossessing aircraft during insolvency proceedings. This led to prolonged legal battles, increased leasing costs, and a decline in investor trust. The bill, originally proposed by the Ministry of Civil Aviation in 2018 and revisited in 2021, aligns India's legal framework with the Cape Town Convention, an international treaty governing aircraft financing.

If passed, the bill will reduce the moratorium period for aircraft repossession from 60 to 40 days and require lessors to settle outstanding dues, such as airport charges, within 60 days. Experts believe the reform will significantly improve air travel accessibility, with domestic passenger traffic projected to increase by 7-10% and international traffic by 15-20% in 2025. Additionally, economic forecasts suggest India's growing middle class could drive annual air traffic growth by 7.4% over the next two decades.

The bill also aims to facilitate the acquisition of over 1,000 new aircraft by the end of the decade, strengthening India's position as a global aviation hub while ensuring compliance with international aviation standards.

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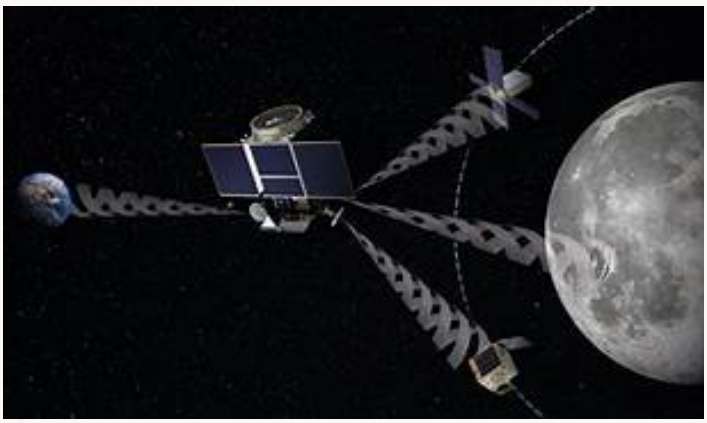
# "Legal Frontiers in Lunar Navigation Tech"

On March 3, 2025, NASA and the Italian Space Agency achieved a historic milestone when the Lunar GNSS Receiver Experiment (LuGRE) acquired and tracked Earth-based GNSS signals on the lunar surface, marking the first demonstration of using both GPS and Galileo signals nearly 225,000 miles from Earth.



Delivered aboard Firefly Aerospace's Blue Ghost lunar lander, LuGRE not only set new altitude records—first capturing signals at 209,900 miles during transit and later at 243,000 miles in lunar orbit—but also showcased the potential for autonomous navigation in deep space, significantly reducing reliance on traditional ground-based tracking systems. This breakthrough, which involved collaboration among NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, the Italian Space Agency, industry partner Qascom, and Politecnico di Torino, promises to enhance the safety and efficiency of future missions, including NASA's Artemis program, by enabling spacecraft to independently determine their position, velocity, and timing.

Moreover, the integration of Earth-based GNSS signals on the Moon brings to the forefront important legal and regulatory issues, such as the application of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, the need for clear spectrum allocation guidelines overseen by bodies like the International Telecommunication Union, and the development of new frameworks addressing data security, signal integrity, and liability in extraterrestrial operations.

As the LuGRE mission continues for the next 14 days, gathering near-continuous data on the lunar surface, it not only paves the way for advanced navigation systems in cislunar and deep-space exploration but also prompts a reexamination of the legal structures necessary to ensure that space exploration remains safe, equitable, and beneficial for all humankind.

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# "APPLE DRAGS UK GOVERNMENT TO COURT OVER 'BACKDOOR' ORDER"

Apple has filed a legal complaint with the UK's Investigatory Powers Tribunal (IPT) against a government order requiring it to weaken iCloud encryption. This marks the first challenge of its kind before the IPT, a judicial body overseeing cases against UK public authorities and intelligence agencies.

The dispute arose after the UK Home Office issued a Technical Capability Notice (TCN) under the Investigatory Powers Act 2016, also known as the Snooper's Charter, directing Apple to create a backdoor for law enforcement access to encrypted iCloud data. The order did not specify technical details but required Apple to make user data accessible. While Apple is legally barred from disclosing details of the notice, it responded by disabling its Advanced Data Protection (ADP) feature for UK users, removing end-to-end encryption (E2EE) for iCloud backups, photos, and notes. However, iMessages and health data remain encrypted.

Apple expressed strong opposition to the order, emphasizing its long-standing commitment to user privacy and refusal to build backdoors into its products. Critics argue that weakening encryption could set a dangerous precedent, with organizations like Big Brother Watch calling the move "draconian." Meanwhile, US officials, including former President Donald Trump, have compared the UK's actions to China's surveillance policies, and the US Director of National Intelligence is reviewing whether the order violates the US-UK Cloud Act Agreement.

This case raises significant concerns over privacy rights, national security, and the future of encryption laws.


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# "POLICY ON USING AI AS A WEAPON AND FOR SURVEILLANCE"

Google has updated its AI principles, removing previous commitments to avoid developing AI for military or surveillance applications. This shift follows CEO Sundar Pichai's participation in U.S. President Donald Trump's inauguration and comes as global debates on AI governance intensify. The revised principles highlight the role of democratic nations in guiding AI development while upholding values such as freedom, equality, and human rights.


Leaders at Google DeepMind, including Demis Hassabis and senior VP James Manyika, have stressed the need for collaboration between governments, companies, and organizations to ensure AI is used responsibly for security, innovation, and global progress. However, concerns remain over AI's increasing role in warfare and surveillance, raising ethical questions about its commercialization and regulation.

Google has significantly expanded its AI capabilities, investing in infrastructure and rolling out AI-powered applications like Gemini, which enhances search features and Pixel devices. The company's stance on corporate responsibility has evolved over time, shifting from its original "Don't be evil" motto to "Do the right thing" under Alphabet Inc. Despite internal employee protests in 2018, which led to Google discontinuing its Pentagon AI contract for "Project Maven," the latest policy revision suggests a new direction.

The removal of Google's previous AI commitments aligns with broader U.S. policy changes, including reduced regulatory oversight on AI safety. Despite this, Google continues to emphasize transparency, publishing annual reports on AI progress.

As AI adoption grows and competition increases, ethical concerns and regulatory frameworks surrounding AI governance remain a topic of global debate.

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# "AUSTRALIA BANS DEEPSEEK ON GOVERNMENT DEVICES OVER SECURITY RISK"

Australia has officially banned DeepSeek, a Chinese AI startup, from all government systems and devices due to national security risks. DeepSeek gained worldwide attention in January after launching a chatbot that rivaled American counterparts while being more cost-effective. However, this triggered stock market drops, including in Australia, where AI-related stocks, such as chipmaker Brainchip, saw significant losses.

Despite speculation, the Australian government insists the decision is based on security concerns rather than the company's Chinese origins. The ban requires all government agencies to block DeepSeek's apps, web services, and software on official devices, affecting employees in agencies like the Australian Electoral Commission and Bureau of Meteorology. However, it does not extend to private users, and its effect on schools remains uncertain.

Experts like Kieren McCarthy from Oxford Information Labs highlight that many governments are restricting new technology over security concerns, often adding a political dimension to AI advancements. The move aligns with past Western bans on Huawei and TikTok, reflecting growing caution towards Chinese technology.

Initially, DeepSeek was a massive success, becoming the most downloaded free app in the UK and US. Former US President Donald Trump saw its potential benefits in lowering AI costs but later acknowledged security concerns. Regulatory bodies in Italy, South Korea, Ireland, and France have since launched investigations into DeepSeek's data handling, given that user data is stored on Chinese servers. The White House has also announced its own review. Australia's ban highlights the increasing overlap between AI, politics, and data security, raising questions about the future of Chinese tech in global markets.


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# "EUROPEAN UNION'S AI ACT"

The EU AI Act introduces a structured, risk-based approach to AI regulation, classifying AI systems into four risk categories: Unacceptable, High, Limited, and Minimal Risk. AI applications deemed unacceptable, such as government-run social scoring and real-time biometric surveillance in public spaces, are completely banned. High-risk AI systems, including those used in healthcare, law enforcement, employment, and critical infrastructure, must meet strict requirements like human oversight, data governance, and cybersecurity measures. The Act also enforces transparency, requiring AI systems to disclose their AI nature to users. A central EU database will track high-risk AI applications, with an EU AI Office overseeing compliance.

This Act is expected to influence global AI regulations, much like GDPR shaped data privacy laws. Countries worldwide may adopt similar rules, and companies operating in the EU will have to adjust their business practices to comply. While these regulations pose compliance challenges and costs, they also promote ethical AI, fostering trust and innovation within safe boundaries. Non-compliance could result in heavy penalties, up to €35 million or 7% of global annual revenue.


India, with its fast-growing AI sector, can draw key lessons from the EU AI Act, including:

- Risk-based AI regulation balancing innovation and safety
- AI transparency and accountability through human oversight
- Strengthened data protection to ensure ethical AI use
- Global alignment for competitiveness in AI markets
- Dedicated AI regulatory bodies to oversee compliance

The EU AI Act sets a global benchmark for responsible AI development. India can leverage these insights to create a balanced AI governance framework, ensuring both innovation and public trust.

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# "GCLT HOSTS STARGAZING EVENT, SHOWCASING CELESTIAL WONDERS"

Gandhinagar, 5/2/2025 – The GNLU Centre for Law and Technology recently organized a fascinating stargazing event, drawing many students and astronomy enthusiasts for an evening under the stars. The event featured expert guidance and high-powered telescopes, giving attendees a chance to witness some of the most incredible celestial sights.

One of the most exciting moments of the night was the rare sighting of Mercury, a planet that is usually difficult to observe due to its proximity to the Sun. Another highlight was Venus, which, like the Moon, goes through different phases. Seeing this firsthand through the telescope was a memorable experience for many. The Moon's craters were also on full display, offering a detailed view of its rugged surface.

Students were amazed by the sharp details, describing it as "looking at history frozen in time." The event concluded with a stunning view of Jupiter and its four largest moons—Io, Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto. These Galilean moons, first discovered by Galileo in 1610, remain a major point of interest for astronomers.

To ensure an enjoyable experience for all, organizers emphasized the careful handling of telescopes. By the end of the night, students left with a newfound appreciation for the wonders of space, making the event a truly unforgettable experience.

# EXPLORING THE LEGAL FRONTIERS OF SPACE

**United States v. Causby, 328 U.S. 256, 66 S. Ct. 1062 (1946)**

In United States v. Causby, the Supreme Court held that frequent low-altitude military flights over a chicken farm constituted a taking under the Fifth Amendment. The noise and disturbance rendered the property unusable, requiring compensation. The case was remanded to determine the easement's value and permanence.

**Alpha Lyracom Space Communications v. COMSAT 1990-2 Trade Cas. (CCH) P69, 188 (S.D.N.Y. 1990)**

The court addressed discovery disputes and a summary judgment motion in an antitrust case. The plaintiffs alleged that Comsat engaged in anticompetitive practices in the satellite communications industry. The court upheld the magistrate judge's discovery rulings and granted summary judgment in favor of Comsat, concluding that the defendant's actions were protected by statutory immunity provisions

**Martin Mariretta v. INTELSAT, 763 F Supp 1327 (D.Md.1991)**

Martin Marietta agreed to launch two satellites for INTELSAT. The first launch failed due to a wiring error, resulting in the satellite entering an unusable orbit. Martin Marietta sought a declaratory judgment of no liability, while INTELSAT counterclaimed for breach of contract and gross negligence. The court dismissed INTELSAT's negligence claims but allowed the breach of contract and gross negligence claims to proceed.

**Hughes Aircraft Co. v. United States 29 Fed. Cl. 197 (1993)**

In Hughes Aircraft Co. v. United States, the Federal Circuit addressed a patent dispute over satellite stabilization technology. The court ruled that the U.S. government's use of the technology fell under a prior license, protecting it from infringement claims. The case reinforced government immunity in military and aerospace patent disputes.

**COMSAT v. Franchise Tax Board, 156 Cal. App. 3d 726 203 Cal. Rptr. 770 (Cal. App. 1st Dist. 1984)**

In COMSAT v. Franchise Tax Board (1984), the California Court of Appeal ruled on whether Communications Satellite Corporation (COMSAT) was subject to California franchise tax. The court determined that COMSAT's business activities in the state justified taxation, rejecting claims that federal law preempted state taxation of its interstate operations.

**Smith v. United States (91-1538), 507 U.S. 197 (1993).**

In this case, the Supreme Court ruled that the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA) does not apply to Antarctica, as it is considered a foreign country despite lacking a government. The petitioner's wrongful death claim was dismissed, affirming that U.S. sovereign immunity remains intact for torts occurring in Antarctica.

## VIST THESE WEBSITES TO EXPLORE MORE ABOUT THE SPACE LAW

- UNOOSA
- ISL
- ECSL
- ASTRO
- OXJOURNAL: CRIME IN SPACE
- GEORGETOWN LAW LIBRARY

# "CHALLENGE YOURSELF WITH OUR SPACE LAW QUIZ!"

**1.Which treaty serves as the foundation of international space law?**
a) Moon Treaty
b) Outer Space Treaty
c) Liability Convention
d) Rescue Agreement

**2.According to space law, how is outer space legally classified?**
a) A territory owned by the UN
b) A shared global commons
c) Divided among spacefaring nations
d) The property of the first nation to land there

**3.Which principle of space law prevents any nation from claiming sovereignty over celestial bodies?**
a) Non-Appropriation Principle
b) Principle of Free Use
c) Planetary Protection Principle
d) The Reciprocity Clause

**4.Which international agreement specifically addresses liability for damage caused by space objects?**
a) Rescue Agreement
b) Liability Convention
c) Registration Convention
d) Moon Treaty

**5.Which legal issue is most relevant to the growing commercialization of space?**
a) The militarization of space
b) The lack of international cooperation
c) The ownership of resources mined from celestial bodies
d) The ban on space travel for private individuals

**6.Why is the Moon Agreement of 1979 not widely accepted?**
a) It grants exclusive mining rights to the UN
b) It does not address commercial activities
c) Major spacefaring nations have not ratified it
d) It allows only government-backed missions

**7.Which organization plays a key role in developing space law and policies at an international level?**
a) The European Space Agency (ESA)
b) The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA)
c) The World Trade Organization (WTO)
d) The International Court of Justice (ICJ)

**8.Which international body is responsible for allocating radio frequencies for lunar missions?**
a) International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
b) United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA)
c) European Space Agency (ESA)
d) National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

**9.What is the purpose of the proposed global database for space traffic management?**
a) To monitor satellite launches
b) To track space debris and prevent collisions
c) To allocate funding for space missions
d) To promote tourism in space

**10.Which agreement allows for the extraction and utilization of lunar resources under certain conditions?**
a) Artemis Accords
b) Outer Space Treaty
c) Moon Agreement
d) Rescue Agreement

# "READ ABOVE? FIND THE WORDS BELOW!"

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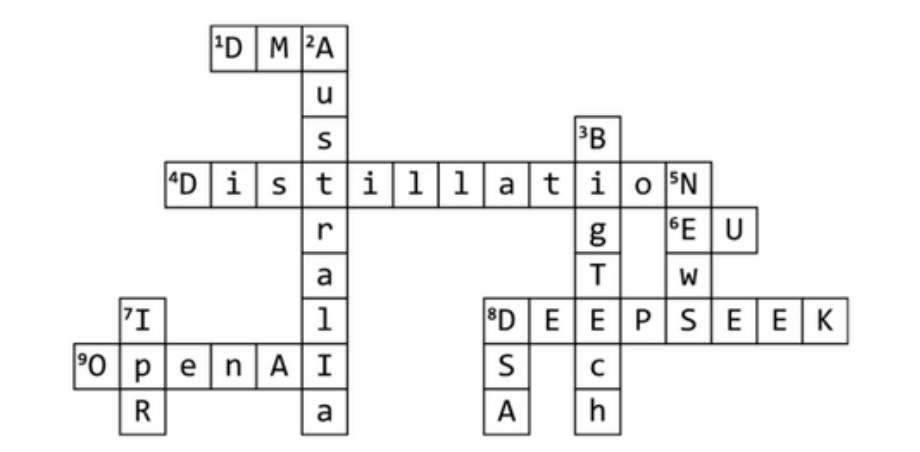
1. Privacy
2. Lawsuit
3. Liability
4. Innovation
5. Regulatory
6. Diplomacy
7. Framework
8. Treaty
9. Penalty
10. Navigation
11. Autonomous
12. Integrity
13. Encryption
14. Cybersecurity
15. Compliance
16. DeepSeek
17. Technology
18. Biometric
19. Database
20. Ethical

# SOLUTIONS TO THE QUIZ & CROSSWORD FROM THE PREVIOUS ISSUE

- **CROSSWORD PUZZLE**




- **QUIZ**

**Answer 1:** B) To protect individuals' personal data and ensure their rights

**Answer 2:** B) Data localization

**Answer 3:** A) To collect and process personal data transparently and accountably

**Answer 4:** B) Data Protection Board of India (DPBI)

**Answer 5:** B) Storing a copy of personal data within India

**Answer 6:** D) Right to sell their data

**Answer 7:** A) Up to Rs. 250 Cr

**Answer 8:** A) General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

**Answer 9:** B) Consent must be explicit, informed and revocable

**Answer 10:** C) Personal data

# SPOTLIGHTING RESEARCH TOPICS: EMPOWERING RESEARCH PAPER ASPIRATIONS

We understand that embarking on a journey to create impactful research papers can be both exciting and daunting. As you navigate through your academic pursuits, we're here to help illuminate your path and fuel your scholarly ambitions. This section presents a curated selection of broad research paper topics designed to spark your intellectual curiosity and inspire your next paper based on the latest developments of this month. Each topic represents an opportunity for exploration, discovery, and the potential to contribute to the ever-evolving landscape of law and technology. We believe that a well-chosen research topic is the cornerstone of a successful publication, and our aim is to empower you to make informed choices.

- *Censorship vs. Privacy in the Digital Age*
- *India's Space Law & Global Standards*
- *Legal Challenges in Space Debris Cleanup*
- *Impact of Aircraft Leasing Reforms on India's Aviation Industry*
- *Lunar Navigation & the Outer Space Treaty*
- *Privacy vs. National Security in the UK*
- *AI Bans & Digital Sovereignty*
- *Human Oversight & Ethics in AI Regulation*
- *IP Rights in Public Space Observations*

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Stay curious, stay informed!


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