



# National AI Portal

## Why in News

The 'National AI Portal', celebrated its **first anniversary on 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2021**.

## Key Points

### ▪ About the National AI Portal:

- It is a **joint initiative by the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY), National e-Governance Division (NeGD) and NASSCOM**.
  - **NeGD:** In 2009, NeGD was created as an Independent Business **Division under the Digital India Corporation** (a not-for-profit company set up by MeitY).
  - **NASSCOM:** A **not-for-profit industry association**, is the **apex body for the IT and IT enabled products and services sector** in India.
- It serves as a **central hub for Artificial Intelligence (AI) related news, learning, articles, events and activities etc.**, in India and beyond.

### ▪ About Artificial Intelligence (AI):

- It describes the **action of machines accomplishing tasks** that have historically required human intelligence.
- It includes technologies like **machine learning, pattern recognition, big data, neural networks, self algorithms etc.**
- AI involves complex things such as **feeding a particular data into the machine and making it react as per the different situations**.
- AI is being **used across different industries** including finance and healthcare.
- As per a report by PwC, India reported **a 45% increase in the use of AI**, the highest among all countries, following the outbreak of the virus.

### ▪ Recent Examples of Use of AI in India:

- **For the Covid-19 Response:** An **AI-enabled Chatbot** was used by **MyGov** for ensuring communications.
- **In Judicial System:** An AI based **portal 'SUPACE'** is aimed at assisting judges with legal research.
- **In Agriculture:** ICRISAT has developed an **AI-power sowing app**, which utilises weather models and data on local crop yield and rainfall to more accurately predict and advise local farmers on when they should plant their seeds.
- **In Disaster Management:** An **AI-based flood forecasting model** that has been **implemented in Bihar** is now being expanded to cover the whole of India to ensure that around 200 million people get alerts and warnings 48 hours earlier about impending floods.
- **In Banking & Financial Services Industry:** Few banks in India have adopted AI **to increase digitisation to improve customer experience and use algorithms in risk management** (for example, fraud detection).

### ▪ Initiatives Taken to Boost Use of AI:

- The **National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence** (NITI Aayog, June 2018) which is

focused on inclusive AI (AI for all), and the [New Education Policy](#) (NEP, 2020) which addresses the need to inculcate AI in the curriculum are the right strategic steps to encourage core and applied research.

- The **Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MTA)** has inked a **MoU with Microsoft** to support the [digital transformation of schools](#) such as **Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)** and Ashram Schools, among others under the Ministry.
- [US India Artificial Intelligence \(USIAI\) initiative](#) has been launched to scale up the science and technology relationship between India and the United States.
- In 2020, India joined the '[Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence \(GPAI\)](#)' as a founding member to support the responsible and human-centric development and use of AI.
- '[RAISE 2020 - Responsible AI for Social Empowerment 2020](#)', a mega virtual summit, was jointly organised by the NITI Aayog and the MeitY.
- The larger aim of the program "[Responsible AI for Youth](#)" is to provide an equal opportunity to all Indian youths - in urban, rural and remote corners of India - to become human-centric designers who can create real AI solutions to solve economic and social impact issues of India.

#### ▪ **Barriers to Adoption of AI:**

- **Limited understanding of AI:** Many Indian companies may have not yet understood the full benefits of leveraging AI in their companies.
- **Low Investments and Less Evolved Startup Ecosystem:** Startup/investment funding ecosystem in India is yet to scale up in terms of AI startups and service providers.
- **Limited Availability of AI Trained Talent:** There is limited infrastructure to 'democratise' and scale-up important AI skills such as deep learning and neural networks.

## Way Forward

- **Global Lessons:** Countries like China, USA and Israel currently lead the way in terms of AI adoption. India can consider a few learnings from these countries to further scale-up its AI ecosystem while keeping in mind the overall social development and inclusiveness agenda.
- **Clear Central Strategy and Policy Framework:** AI adoption in India can be accelerated through the formulation of more focused policies related to innovation, for example, patent control and security. [Malicious use of AI](#) should be managed as well.
- **Collaboration among Government, Corporates and Academia:** These three critical stakeholders need to work synergistically to undertake actions like nurturing entrepreneurship, promoting re-skilling, encouraging research and development, and driving the policies on the ground.

[Source: PIB](#)

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