

Press Release

Artificial Intelligence Takes Fore at IETF 2019

A range of ideas were discussed on promoting Artificial Intelligence at the AlforAll: Innovation for Inclusion conference jointly organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology; Department of Telecommunications and Department of Biotechnology, Government of India in New Delhi on 4th February 2019. The conference, in conjunction with the International Engineering and Technology Fair (IETF) 2019, gains significance after the announcement on promoting Artificial Intelligence in the recent Interim Budget.

“Technology, innovation and problem solving should happen together,” stated Mr. Gopalakrishnan S, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India while speaking on the importance of data protection. He stressed on the importance of the Data Protection Law and emphasized that “a culture of awareness of privacy needs to be brought in” as technology evolves. He further mentioned that while there are concerns whether this might slow down the process of innovation, India is reasonably positioned in terms of both talent and data to work on how to achieve perfect anonymisation.

Mr. Gopalakrishnan also stated that while evolving technologies offered a number of conveniences and advantages, there are pitfalls and the various departments and Government Ministries need to come together to provide proper training and offer solutions.

Mr. Anant Maheshwari, Chairman, CII National Committee on IT and ITeS and President, Microsoft India Pvt. Ltd. highlighted the three pillars or the ‘ABC’ of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which include analytics and algorithms, big data and cloud which can transform human lives and make things simpler and better.

Mr. Maheshwari added that AI has helped increase skills in the country and that “India is uniquely positioned as we have large amounts of data”. He further stated that there is a great deal of infusion of data in all the sectors from education to healthcare to agriculture, especially with the Digital India push that the country has seen in recent years.

He stated that three task forces have been set up in the three core areas of skilling, agriculture and education with clear goals to harness the growth opportunities of these sectors through AI. He emphasized the importance of industry leadership in implementation of these goals and further scaling up in the future.

Mr. Rajan Navani, Chairman, CII National Committee on AI, Vice Chairman and Managing Director, Jetline India group stated that as multiple stakeholder movements would help accelerate the pace of AI, it would impact all citizens and the opportunity to go global would also increase. He also stated that as AI evolves, the Government will need to innovate in terms of ethics as well as policy and find a way to unlock the immense potential and capabilities of AI.

Lt General Sudhir Sharma, Chairman, Mitkat Advisory, noted that for India to become a ten trillion dollar economy, it was critical for AI to reach and connect the Indian villages. He further added that as more and more industries have access to more data, they will be able to adapt to AI faster and in this way “AI in all its dimensions will help India grow.”

A Report on Artificial Intelligence was presented at the conference.

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New Delhi