

## A New Global Standard for AI Ethics

### What is the issue?

Artificial intelligence (AI) is more present in our lives than ever but it cannot be said to always be beneficial.

### What is Artificial Intelligence (AI)?

- **AI**- AI refers to the simulation of human intelligence in machines that are programmed to think like humans and mimic their actions.
- The goals of artificial intelligence include learning, reasoning, and perception.
- **Machine learning**- Machine learning refers to the concept that computer programs can automatically learn from and adapt to new data without being assisted by humans.
- **Deep learning**- Deep learning techniques enable this automatic learning through the absorption of huge amounts of unstructured data such as text, images, or video.

### What about the application of AI?

- India is one of the world's largest markets for AI-related technologies valued at over 7.8 billion dollar in 2021.
- **Applications of AI**
  - **Healthcare**- AI is utilised for dosing drugs and different treatment in patients, and for surgical procedures.
  - **Gaming**- Artificial intelligence include computers that play chess.
  - **Automobiles**- Self-driving cars utilise the AI technology.
  - **Finance**- AI is used to detect and flag activities such as unusual debit card usage and large account deposits.
  - **Agriculture**- AIs are utilised for real-time insights from their fields, intelligent spraying, disease diagnosis, etc.
  - **Assistance**- Personal assistants such as Amazon's Alexa and Apple's Siri are included in the weak AI systems (designed to carry out one particular job).

*The National Strategy on Artificial Intelligence released by NITI Aayog in 2018 highlights the massive potential of AI across areas such as agriculture, health, and education.*

### What are the issues in AI?

- **Biased outcomes**- The data used to feed into AI often aren't representative of the diversity of our societies, producing biased or discriminatory outcomes.
  - For instance, while India and China together constitute around a third of the world's population but they form just 3% of images used in ImageNet.

- **Issue with facial recognition tech-** The scope for racial discrimination is increasing with increased usage of facial recognition technology.
  - For three programs released by major tech companies, the error rate was 1% for light-skinned men, but 19% for dark-skinned men, and up to 35% for dark-skinned women.
- Biases in facial recognition technologies have led to wrongful arrests.

## What is the global standard for AI ethics?

- In 2021, the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence was adopted by UNESCO's General Conference at its 41st session.
- It aims to fundamentally shift the balance of power between people, and the businesses and governments developing AI.
- UNESCO members have agreed to use affirmative action to make sure that women and minority groups are fairly represented on AI design teams.
- The recommendation also underscores the importance of the proper management of data, privacy and access to information.
- It calls on member states to ensure that appropriate safeguards are devised for the processing of sensitive data and effective accountability and redress mechanisms are provided.
- The Recommendation takes a strong stance that
  - AI systems should not be used for social scoring or mass surveillance purposes
  - Attention must be paid to the psychological and cognitive impact that these systems can have on children
  - Member states should invest and promote not only digital, media and information literacy skills, but also socio-emotional and AI ethics skills.
- The UNESCO is also in the process of developing tools to help assess the readiness in the implementation of the recommendations.

*Finland's 2017 AI Strategy demonstrated how governments can effectively promote ethical AI use without compromising the desire to be on the cutting edge of new technologies.*

## How to ensure the full potential of these technologies?

- The right incentives for ethical AI governance need to be established in national and sub-national policy.
- The recommendations must be put to use to guide governments and companies to develop and deploy AI technologies that conform to the commonly agreed principles.

*NITI Aayog's #AIForAll campaign aimed at the development of responsible and ethical AI governance.*

## References

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