Shri Dharmendra Pradhan announces 3 Centres of Excellence in AI in Healthcare, Agriculture and Sustainable Cities

AI-CoEs are going to be solution-providers of the world - Shri Dharmendra Pradhan

AI-CoEs will create new generation of job creators and wealth creators and establish new paradigms of global public good - Shri Dharmendra Pradhan

Government approved Rs. 990.00 Crore for creation of three AI-CoEs

Union Minister for Education, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, announced the establishment of three AI Centres of Excellence (CoE) focused on Healthcare, Agriculture, and Sustainable Cities in New Delhi today. Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Shri K. Sanjay Murthy; Co-chair of the Apex Committee and Founder and CEO of Zoho Corporation, Shri Sridhar Vembu; Chairman of the National Educational Technology Forum, Prof. Anil Sahasrabudhe; MD, PeakXV Partners and Surge, Shri Rajan Anandan; CEO, Khosla Labs, Shri Srikanth Nadhamuni; Head, Cropin AI Labs, Dr. Praveen Pankajakshan; senior officials from various ministries of the Government of India, Directors of IITs, Heads of higher educational institutions (HEIs), industry leaders, and start-up founders were also present at the event. Shri Pradhan presented a sapling and a Plaque to the representatives of AIIMS and IIT Delhi, IIT Ropar, and IIT Kanpur, which will lead the CoEs, for their commitments and support. Respective Apex Committee members of the AI-CoE Healthcare, Agriculture and Sustainable Cities explained the scope and extent of the projects.

While speaking at the event, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan hoped that the three AI-CoEs would emerge as temples of global public good. With the unveiling of the Centres, significant strides have been taken to strengthen Bharat's credentials in the global AI landscape, he added. Shri Pradhan also said that with the talent and zeal that Bharat is blessed with, in the times ahead, these CoEs will be a key element of global public policy and also emerge as solution providers of the world.

He complimented the apex committee led by Shri Sridhar Vembu for their meticulous and sincere efforts towards the implementation of these COEs in AI in the top academic institutions of the country. Expressing his gratitude to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for his vision to establish India as a global hub of AI, he added that these CoEs in AI will give further impetus to the start-up ecosystem in the country, help create a new generation of job and wealth creators, and establish new paradigms of global public good.

Shri K. Sanjay Murthy, in his address highlighted that these CoEs are not just institution-based but are designed to serve the entire country. Stressing the importance of interdisciplinary research, he mentioned that with the right kind of collaboration among like-minded resources, optimum results can be achieved. He noted that the competitive-based challenge methods developed in educational institutions have ensured progress toward resolving common problems. He also expressed his gratitude to Shri Dharmendra Pradhan for his leadership and vision in bringing the entire project to fruition.

Dr. Sridhar Vembu, in his address, highlighted how these projects will holistically benefit the health of villages, cities, and the people of the country. He emphasized the importance of nurturing the country's talent pool to ensure its members flourish and serve the nation in the coming 10 to 20 years. He added that the CoEs will bootstrap numerous efforts, create companies, nurture talent, and generate opportunities for our talent pool.

The genesis, implementation and insights into development so far in the AI-CoE was presented by Smt. Saumya Gupta Joint Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education. A short film on the theme, Make AI in India and Make Al work for India, was also shown during the event.

To realize the vision of "Viksit Bharat," these three CoEs for Artificial Intelligence (AI) will be led by top educational institutions, in consortium with industry partners and startups. They will conduct interdisciplinary research, develop cutting-edge applications, and create scalable solutions in these three areas. This initiative aims to galvanize an effective AI ecosystem and nurture quality human resources in these critical fields.

As part of the vision to "Make AI in India and Make AI work for India," the establishment of these centres was announced under Para 60 of the Budget Announcement for 2023-24. In alignment with this, the Government has approved the creation of the three AI Centres of Excellence, with a total financial outlay of Rs. 990.00 Crore over the period of FY 2023-24 to FY 2027-28.

To oversee the implementation of this initiative, an industry heavy Apex Committee has been constituted, co-chaired by Dr. Sridhar Vembu.

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