Rise in AI Adoption in India Amidst Pandemic

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Why in News

As per **a report by PwC** (a global network of firms), India reported a **45% increase** in the use of **Artificial Intelligence**, the highest among all countries, following the outbreak of the virus.

Key Points

- **Findings:**
  - The rise of AI adoption (45%) recorded in the country is the highest, when compared to major economies like the USA, Japan and the UK.
    - The **USA recorded a 35% rise, the UK 23% and Japan 28%** following the outbreak of the virus.
  - The report **attributes** the growing AI adoption to the **shift in buying behaviour and new business challenges** (owing to **Covid-19 pandemic**).
    - For instance, AI-enabled use cases like contactless sales and delivery have gained traction. AI solutions are also being used to make the workplace safer and enforce best practices.
  - The **sectors with highest Covid-19 led disruption adopted AI solutions** in a more definitive manner. In the **travel and hospitality sector,** 89% firms have implemented AI in some form.

- **Artificial Intelligence:**
    - 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.** It is basically about creating **self-learning patterns** where the machine can give answers to the never answered questions like a human would ever do.
    - AI technology helps in analyzing data and thus can improve the **efficiency of the systems** like power management in cars, mobile devices, weather predictions, video and image analysis.
    - **Example (Use):** Self driving cars.
- **Recent Government Initiatives:**
    - India has launched **National AI Strategy** and National AI Portal and has also started leveraging AI across various sectors such as education, agriculture, healthcare, e-commerce, finance, telecommunications, etc.
    - Recently, 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.

Use of AI in India

- **To Tackle the Pandemic:**
    - **At the National Level:**
        - For the Covid-19 response, an **AI-enabled Chatbot** was used by **MyGov** for ensuring communications.
        - Similarly, the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** deployed the **Watson Assistant** on its portal to respond to specific queries of frontline staff and data entry operators from various testing and diagnostic facilities across the country on Covid-19.
    - **In Kerala:** Use of **Srishti Robotics' 'Nightingale-19 Robot'** is a good example. It **delivers food and medicines** in bulk and also allows doctors and other healthcare practitioners to use video interactive technologies to interact with patients.
    - **In Maharashtra: FebriEye** is an **AI based thermal screening system** for real-time and automated, non-intrusive monitoring to ensure that a person entering does not **have a high fever.**
        It has been **installed in** Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus and Lokmanya Tilak Terminus in Mumbai.

- **In Other Sectors:**
  - AI-based solutions on **water management, crop insurance and pest control** are also being developed.
    - 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.
  - 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.
  - The **Central Board of Secondary Education** has integrated AI in the school curriculum to ensure that students passing out have the basic knowledge and skills of data science, machine learning and artificial intelligence.
  - The **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** had launched a **"Responsible AI for Youth"** programme this year in April, wherein more than 11,000 students from government schools completed the basic course in AI.

Way Forward

- As AI works for **digital inclusion** in India, it will have a **ripple effect on economic growth and prosperity.** The opportunity for AI in India is colossal, as is the scope for its implementation. By 2025, data and AI can add over USD 500 billion and almost 20 million jobs to the Indian economy.
- India **wants to build a data-rich and a data-driven society as data, through AI,** which offers limitless opportunities to improve society, empower individuals and increase the ease of doing business. India can leverage AI for inclusive development, representing the country's **'AI for All' strategy.**

Source:IE